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EDITORIAL COMMENT AND NEWS NOTES

WHAT ABOUT DISCIPLINE IN YOUR SCHOOL?

Modern psychology has directed the attention of educators to the multiple causation of behavior and to the complexity of motivation. Many teachers while accepting these theories verbally find difficulty in utilizing them in guiding children to steady growth in the self-control and self-direction required of mature, democratic persons.

Confronted by a large group of children in the classroom, teachers find themselves torn between their responsibility to help the group achieve the educational purposes for which the school is established and at the same time to give effective individual guidance to children who are in the process of developing attitudes, standards, and values.

Faced by a task of this magnitude, it is not surprising that teachers become uncertain and resort to practices they recall from their own childhood and youth. The implementation of theory into practice is never an easy task. Principals or supervisors who attempt to help teachers achieve the kind of discipline needed for today's children are undertaking the most difficult and most important task of education, because the quality of mature human beings which schools can produce today represents the hope of a future world of order.

How can a supervising principal or a consultant in elementary education provide effective in-service experiences designed to improve school discipline? One consultant suggests a series of staff meetings. The first meeting would be an open discussion designed to provide opportunity for everyone to re-examine his ideas on controversial issues. From this discussion several agreements may emerge as follows:

- All children need help in growth toward self-discipline.
- Simply stopping behavior through punishment is useless or worse. We need to know the causes of behavior before it can be changed.
- The child's feelings and attitudes are as important as his conduct.
- How can an educational program be provided in which desirable behavior is easy, natural, and satisfying.

With this foundation established, the teachers may be asked to bring to subsequent meetings notes of specific incidents in which they had to

interfere or take action, or in which they felt uncertain about what to do. These problems can probably be classified under three headings:

1. General dissatisfaction with classroom order and organization
2. Negative behavior arising from the nature of children and the diversity of their background
3. Excessive and continuing cases of negative behavior

Many constructive ways of dealing with behavior problems in the first two categories will arise out of group discussion with the informed guidance of the principal or consultant. Discussion will provide relief to teachers discouraged by the slow progress they are able to make with the "hard core" cases represented by the third category.

During the 1957-1958 school year, Helen Heffernan, Chief, Bureau of Elementary Education, developed plans for bringing together descriptions of certain promising activities related to school discipline and particularly those based on action research involving pupils, teachers, principals, parents, and persons concerned with the preservice and inservice education of teachers. A group of interested school people who were able to meet together conveniently in southern California were invited to participate in the project. This group devoted two sessions to planning this issue of the Journal. The group included:

Eli M. Bower, Education Research Project Co-ordinator, Emotionally Disturbed Children, Bureau of Special Education, California State Department of Education

Stella Broholm, Principal, York Elementary School, Hawthorne

Elizabeth Brady, Assistant Professor, Los Angeles State College

Grace Hendrickson, Principal, Hawthorne Intermediate School, Hawthorne

Donald McNassor, Professor of Education, Claremont College

Mrs. Mabel Purl, Director of Research and Testing, Riverside Public Schools

Mrs. Sybil Richardson, Consultant in Research and Guidance, Office of the County Superintendent of Schools, Los Angeles

Thomas A. Shellhammer, Consultant in Education Research, California State Department of Education

Mrs. Faith Smither, Education Extension, University of California, Los Angeles

Iris Timson, Assistant Professor, Los Angeles State College

Dorothy Welch, Supervisor of Elementary Education, Long Beach Unified School District

Mrs. Lois Williams, Consultant, Montebello Unified School District

The Bureau of Elementary Education will appreciate receiving information concerning studies going on in your school designed to deepen the insight of teachers in interpreting child behavior and in guiding children to increasingly higher levels of self-control.

DISCIPLINE AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

ELI M. BOWER, *Education Research Project Co-ordinator, Emotionally Disturbed Children, Bureau of Special Education, California State Department of Education*

Discipline might be defined as a type of behavior usually lacking in the children of neighbors, friends, and relatives. Everyone seems to be for it, but there is some disagreement on what it is and what methods insure a healthy dose in those who need it. Most persons agree that whatever method is used to instill it in children, it should be effective. Upon prodding, most persons would also agree that by "effective" they mean producing some immediate change in behavior; upon further prodding they would agree that such changes in behavior should, in the long run, produce a healthy, happy, and productive human being.

If discipline then is perceived as a method of influencing the behavior of children, it must be rooted in some theory of personality development. A person who really believes in immediate and harsh punishment as a method of discipline must also believe in the positive consequences of such punishment. Conversely, a parent who believes in setting no rules or limits for a child believes this will produce the desired results. In each and every case of discipline, i.e., a person trying to influence the behavior of another, there is a theory of personality dynamics and development implicit in the core of the method.

To study personality one must combine the astuteness of a Sherlock Holmes with the conceptual abilities of an Einstein. Personality is an abstraction of many processes and can only be inferred from behavior. Much of what is called personality, like an iceberg, exists beneath the surface of conscious awareness and is often invisible to the owner. Personality is often discussed as a thing or object; it is well to remember this thing or object is a kaleidoscope of high-order abstractions useful in explaining, understanding, and predicting behavior. No one knows exactly what electricity is, yet its characteristics can be used in predicting its behavior; similarly, the study of human behavior must infer the presence of an inner source of motivation called personality which will explain man's behavior.

Personality is usually explained by the use of "common sense." By common sense most persons mean putting oneself in the place of the person whose behavior is to be understood and inferring that his motivations would be much the same as one's own under similar circumstances. Such a procedure of understanding behavior has the advantage of ready self reference but the disadvantage of often being inaccurate especially where the experiences of the two persons are markedly different. Some persons explain or understand personality in terms of two or three magical words such as *love*, *security*, or *recognition*. Motivations are explained by the absence of one or more of these ingredients, which are perceived in a manner similar to vitamins that can be fed to those showing nutritional deficiencies. Personality theory, however, to be useful and helpful, must explain the unique and idiosyncratic behavior of each individual in some operational and testable manner and still keep him in the human race. To do this one needs to perceive personality development as a series of interpersonal experiences which establish reference points or bases from which behavior can be understood and predicted. Such a theory will be presented in an oversimplified manner more as an example of this kind of theory and certainly not as the final answer to the most puzzling of all human problems.¹

Despite doting grandparents and enthusiastic parents, an infant cannot be said to have a personality right off the bat. All infants are motivated by basic drives or tensions which require food and some sucking for satisfaction. The strength of these tensions undoubtedly varies from infant to infant as does the biological equipment which the infant has at his disposal. As a passive, dependent, and receptive organism, the infant has little if any awareness of the differences between him and his environment. He feels tension when hungry and pleasure when fed; to the extent that he feels confident in the successful consummation of this sequence of events (tension food → pleasure) he begins to feel less anxious or more comfortable about his passive, dependent existence. This period of life—a passive, dependent one establishes a firm base or jumping-off point from which the child can go on or to which he can occasionally backtrack or launch a full retreat. The blanket—thumb-in-mouth syndrome of children (including Peanuts, the lovable comic strip character) is an observable example of this kind of keeping one foot on the last safe base. Severe personality disorders in adults usually

¹A more extended discussion is presented by Clyde Sullivan, Marguerite Q. Grant, and J. Douglas Grant in "The Development of Interpersonal Maturity: Applications to Delinquency," *Psychiatry*, XXIV (November, 1957), 373-85.

result in a complete retreat to a passive, dependent relationship with many of the same characteristics of infants.

During this passive, dependent period the world and the infant are one and the same. The infant cannot differentiate himself from his surroundings and apparently he has no perceptions of time or space. As the infant gets older he begins to become dimly aware of things and people other than himself. These soon become objects and persons which help the growing infant and child to separate self from nonself. This process, which the infant uses to differentiate self from nonself, is the basic substance of personality. Some call it ego, others self. The ego or self when fully developed is a set of personality processes related mainly to the perceptual systems which act as an interpreter and modifier of the external world in accordance with the inner and outer needs of the organism. At first, ego processes are pleasure seeking, i.e., direct the organism toward pleasure and away from pain. These ego processes are called pleasure egos and are gradually replaced in normal development as reality egos. "Just as the pleasure egos can do nothing but wish, work towards gaining pleasure and avoiding pain, so the reality egos need do nothing but strive for what is useful and guard themselves against damage. Actually, the substitution of the reality principle for the pleasure principle denotes no dethronement of the pleasure principle, but only a safeguarding of it. A momentary pleasure, uncertain in its results, is given up but only in order to gain in the new way an assured pleasure coming later.² The superiority of the reality ego compared to the pleasure ego is aptly expressed by Bernard Shaw as "being able to choose the line of greatest advantage instead of yielding in the direction of least resistance."

Why does a child give up pleasure-seeking processes for tensions and future reward? The first exposure of the pleasure ego to the reality principle comes with the changing relationship of the child from passive dependency to some meaningful give-and-take with parents. As a dependent, passive creature, nothing is asked of the infant. Soon, however, he is asked to control certain pleasures or impulses such as wetting or soiling his pants. This he can comply with if he is developmentally able to and if the rewards in the form of parental love and assurance are sufficient for him to take the step. He will also give up the pleasure ego for the reality ego under conditions of severe threat, shame, or punishment when the pleasure ego is overwhelmed by the pain. In such

² Sigmund Freud, *Collected Papers*, Vol. IV. London: Hogarth Press, 1950, p. 18.

cases ego processes, still needing supportive relationships with parents, may need to distort somewhat the perceptions of parents or manage additional amounts of anxiety about self worth. In cases where the ego needs to harbor excessive hostility, such hostility may manifest itself at times by occasional excessive wetting or soiling or perfectionistic cleanliness. At times the child is ready to give up his pleasure ego for parents, but no demands are made. Since the child has nothing to gain by giving up his infant pleasures, he will continue to function as a dependent, passive person. In any case, the experiences of the still defenseless ego in this first real interpersonal relationship sets the stage for later relationships. This is the second major base of personality development.

Children who have had difficulty in maintaining a positive perception of self during early socialization experiences perpetuate these difficulties in different forms as they grow up. Some feel a need to conform in social situations or lose the love of others; others feel compelled to be orderly and neat to the exclusion of other values. However, when the child is confused by inconsistency or threatened by fear, his ego process begins to build for him a kind of psychological resistance to this danger. Since it is the function of the ego to protect the individual against dangers from within and without, ego processes often need to distort reality to do this. For example, the ego of a child may perceive a parent as a punishing, nonloving adult; to protect the organism, the ego may need to *repress* continuous hostility from expressing itself since the organism needs to perceive the parent as a warm, comforting, and loving person. Repression³ is one of many mechanisms which the ego uses to protect the organism from having to deal with painful feelings. Repression, like other ego mechanisms, is unconsciously⁴ employed; there is no awareness by the organism that such ego mechanisms are operating. Repression is one of the basic types of defenses used by ego processes. It results in locking up or distorting feelings which may later appear in the child's personality in disguise. For example, the ego processes may repress unconscious feelings of hostility of a son for his father. The son may demonstrate love and respect for his father but continually despise his supervisors or administrators.⁵

³ The difference, for example, between repression and suppression might better be understood by this example: When a person is angry and counts to 10 he may be said to be suppressing his anger. In repression, he never feels angry.

⁴ Unconscious mechanisms may sound mystical and farfetched but there is much evidence indicating the presence of this kind of process. The unconscious is subject to neither moral, logical, or rational controls. Its operation is most visible in dreams and slips of the tongue.

⁵ See for example, *Feelings of Hostility*, 16 mm. films, Canadian Mental Health Board.

Another defense the ego may take on behalf of the organism is to exaggerate the opposite of a repressed impulse. For example, a girl's oversolicitous concern about her mother's health can stem from repressed feelings of hostility. Or an overly polite child who can overwhelm one with a combination of "sir, madam, thank you, excuse me," and "I beg your pardon," may get a great kick out of torturing animals. Somerset Maugham provides an excellent example of this type of reactive mechanism in his story *Rain*.

Other types of defenses are well documented and observable. What needs to be understood, however, is that these are employed by the ego against threats from outside or against inner impulses which may cause the organism overwhelming anxiety. To the extent that the ego needs to employ defenses, to that extent is the perception of self and the external world distorted. In individuals where the ego needs to employ defense mechanisms in a continual and increasing manner the result may be a severe distortion of reality classified as psychosis. The less severe distortions such as phobias, compulsions, and character disorders are classified under the general terms of neuroses.

In cases where early anxieties and threats overwhelm ego processes no satisfactory ego is developed. In such children the ego is unable to defend the organism by the types of defenses mentioned above. Such children continually act out their anxieties and problems and in their development are seldom able to tolerate any goal delay or anxiety. They therefore function at the pleasure ego level, demanding immediate gratification from the environment and releasing the energy induced by the anxiety in a childlike manner when immediate gratification is not forthcoming.

So far, two reference points or bases in personality development have been discussed. As the infant develops stronger ego processes and faces his early socialization experiences, he begins to perceive the presence of rules and regulations and their relationship to his needs. It is not sufficient to want candy and ask mother or father—a substance called money is also necessary. The child also learns these rules can be used or manipulated. For example, good children get candy; bad children do not. When the demands of such rules are transmitted inconsistently or in a manner too threatening or severe for his ego processes, the child may learn to fear and resent any external control. Or in some cases his ego may direct him toward safe and unchanging rules which can magically solve all problems. His anxieties about rules may lead to

difficulties with those who enunciate them. Or his defense may be one of trying to find out what the rules are and conforming meticulously.

When the world of rules and laws are integrated successfully into the personality, the child is ready for his next base. His ego processes or self begin to perceive the reaction of others and to incorporate others into self by identification. Boys identify with fathers or father figures; girls with mothers or mother figures. The child will often play important roles as a safe kind of anticipation or to relieve some anxiety about his eventual suitability for it. In all his phantasy and role-play, the child is providing his ego processes an opportunity to master feelings of inadequacy or insignificance. Therefore, a child whose ego development is distorted may need to play at "big shot" to try to deal with feelings of inadequacy or fall back to an earlier, safer base. Other reactions to such feelings of inadequacy can lead to strong desires for prestige and domination in peer relations or to a type of delinquent behavior which can prove the courage and manliness of the person.

Later bases or critical phases of ego development include one in which the child learns to differentiate, perceive, and be comfortable in a variety of roles and one in which he gains experiences in perceiving himself realistically and realizing the integrating and creative aspects of his personality. These reference points or critical phases in ego development have been presented as discrete points only for purposes of discussion. Each phase overlaps the others; no personality is so well integrated that it doesn't fall back on one or another base of operations under circumstances involving different degrees of anxiety.

What has all this to do with discipline? First, it is clear that for a person to achieve any level of healthy personality integration, demands must be made on him by others which he can handle at the appropriate level of development. The problem is not so much whether or not a child should be disciplined but how can discipline be used so that it offers him the best chance for growth toward self discipline. As Edmund Burke said, "Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere; and the less of it there is within, the more of it there must be without."

One of the difficulties in the application of discipline is the negative perception of the word and idea. Parents or teachers who have read or heard that discipline causes frustration and that continual frustration causes personality problems find themselves between Scylla and Charybdis. Ego strength and development cannot take place without

parental and societal discipline. Certainly discipline involves frustration, but only if it is the kind and amount that a child can accept can it be incorporated by the ego processes and be used to build ego strength and self discipline. Each mature ego holds a criminal or psychotic in leash; each defective ego increases the need for outer controls. The ineffectiveness of severe physical punishment, shame, or other ego alien processes on children lies in the fact that in most cases it is used to discipline children who are most in need of ego strengthening experiences. The ineffectiveness of this type of discipline often serves to increase the fury and hostility of the punisher and helps the child learn much about fury and hostility.

In order for discipline to be effective it must build and not destroy. Discipline must provide demands on children which they may or may not like but which they can accept. Often this serves to convince some persons that personality theory leads to mild, inoffensive, or just plain "wishy-washy" discipline. Discipline must serve the receiver, and this it cannot do if it only serves the giver. August Aichorn⁶ applied some of Freud's theories in treating neurotic delinquents with a kind and forgiving discipline because he foresaw that this would increase the child's chance of growth. His success was spectacular although his "discipline" seemed lax. This type of discipline was suggested by Victor Hugo in *Les Misérables* sixty years before Freud. Aichorn's contribution was a scientific demonstration of the effectiveness of understanding the personality and ego defenses of the child. This is not to say that some children do not need firmness and close supervision by a parent or parent surrogate for effective growth. This is especially true of children who have difficulty internalizing rules and need help in dealing with impulses unacceptable to self.

In light of the theory of personality growth presented herein, how does punishment as discipline apply? There are several basic differences between punishment and discipline in terms of effectiveness and ego growth. Both discipline and punishment are applied when a child ignores or misinterprets some aspects of reality. In interpreting this ignored segment of reality to the person to be disciplined, the disciplinarian acts as an agent of reality and focuses on the ignored or misinterpreted reality in an effort to interpret what was ignored or misinterpreted. The punisher focuses only superficially on the ignored or misinterpreted reality. Much of the energy which goes into the punish-

⁶ August Aichorn, *Wayward Youth*. New York: Viking Press, 1935.

ment often comes from sources other than the child's misdeeds; usually there are amounts of anxiety about the act, personal inconveniences, and personal needs mixed into the punishment. The severest forms of punishment are usually reserved for those transgressions which incite the greatest amount of fear, revulsion, or anxiety in the punisher. For example, sex play by children is often punished peremptorily and severely because of the anxiety it involves in some adults.

Fromm⁷ discusses the difference between punishment and discipline as a difference between rational and inhibiting authority. In the latter case, the prevailing relationship is exploitive and the distance between the child and adult becomes greater and more hostile as the relationship continues. Rational authority, on the other hand, creates a relationship in which teacher and pupil or parent and child tend to feel positively toward one another though one is in a position of superiority. Rational authority leads the child to identify with the authority rather than to fear it and, if successful, tends to dissolve itself. There may, however, be occasions when punishment may be more effective in terms of immediate goals especially where life and limb are at stake. One may need to teach a child to avoid running into the street or playing around a swimming pool quickly else one would not have the opportunity of using other types of discipline.

Although discipline is commonly thought of as a method of controlling behavior, it can be regarded as a process of freeing behavior. Individuals who are inwardly disciplined are free in that they are aware of their motivations and can function to the maximum of their potential. In a society which prizes human dignity above all else, maximum individualization and maximum socialization form an indissoluble unity. To the extent that the individual is inwardly free to think and act is he free to participate as an effective citizen of a democracy. The description of a sailboat as "running free," i.e., making maximum use of the sails and wind, is an apt analogy. Discipline frees the individual to behave in accordance with a healthy ego and an undistorted view of other persons. Effective discipline should help a child to perceive the consequences of his actions, to be able to learn to write and speak clearly, to inhibit irrelevant ideas, to apply effort after failure, to express acceptable impulses with spontaneity and tenderness, to feel comfortable in a position of authority, and to stand alone.

⁷ Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom*. New York: Rinehart & Co., 1941, p. 164.

A STUDY OF TEACHERS' BELIEFS REGARDING CONTROL OF CHILD BEHAVIOR

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Los Angeles*

In an effort to gauge differences and agreements between teachers' beliefs about the control of children and their principals' points-of-view on the same subject, a short questionnaire was given to approximately one hundred teachers in the Education Extension classes of the University of California, Los Angeles. The teachers were from various parts of the city and county of Los Angeles and taught in grades from kindergarten through the senior high school. Extension class students were questioned in order to take the study away from the school in which the teachers taught. Thus, it was believed, the teachers would feel free to indicate any differences in points-of-view between teachers and principal.

Five questions were asked:

1. For what kinds of behavior are children in your school usually punished?
2. What are the most frequent kinds of punishment used?
3. State briefly the point-of-view which your principal holds regarding control and punishment.
4. In what ways do you agree or disagree with your principal's point-of-view on control?
5. In your opinion what are the most common causes of children's misbehavior?

The conclusions from such a small study cannot be considered conclusive but at least they are provocative. They are reported here not as findings validated by statistical analysis but to encourage more intensive study and discussion of the issues raised.

One of the most interesting findings was in relation to the last question, "In your opinion what are the most common causes of children's misbehavior?" Almost every teacher gave an answer to this question that showed he had some knowledge of child development. Only one

teacher showed complete naiveté by stating the cause of most misbehavior as "poor manners." The following causes listed by teachers show recognition that children's misbehavior in school often stems from home: no feeling of parental love or concern; both parents working—"no one cares for me so I don't care for anyone else" attitude; lack of consistency of parental standards; lack of proper values at home; no respect for authority at home. These following statements suggest that situations created by teachers and the school are sometimes responsible for children's misbehavior: work too hard or too easy; classes too large; restlessness because students are kept too long at one activity; school program does not fit child's needs; poor lesson preparation on the part of the teacher; foolish or arbitrary school rules.

The statements that follow show knowledge of children's emotional difficulties as the sources of misbehavior in a school: jealousy of siblings—too much competition; feeling on the part of some children that they cannot compete with others; actual psychosis; brain damage; fatigue; lack of interest in the subject taught.

These replies to question 5 indicate that the teachers have knowledge of many of the causes of children's problem behavior. Teachers have gained much information in recent years as a result of improved teacher education and the increase of general knowledge regarding human motivation.

The next interesting finding from this study is the lack of relationship between teachers' apparent knowledge of the causes of children's misbehavior and the kinds of punishment used. In almost every case the teacher stated that the kind of child behavior most frequently punished in their schools was destructive, acting out behavior—from throwing stones in the kindergarten to the defacing of school property, smoking on the school grounds, and disturbing class procedures in the high school. In spite of apparent understanding of causes as indicated in their replies to question 5, the punishments often seemed unrelated to the causes listed. For example, the following are typical of the punishments described:

Punishments that remove the child culprit from the class or school: suspension; expulsion; removal from the group; sending child to office; benching during recess.

Punishments that are retaliatory in nature: four reports of corporal punishment used; citations rescinding noon privileges; being deprived

of some special event; working after school; extra assignments; loss of merit; lowering grades; recess in the office.

The above punishments listed by teachers are age-old, superficial, sometimes cruel, and frequently ineffective. At best they sometimes control the misbehaviors temporarily. They do not eradicate the causes of the misbehavior or change the children's emotional responses to the situations which provoked the misbehaviors.

In a few instances the teachers stated that such arbitrary punishments were not helpful but that a study of each individual child was made in their schools. One teacher made the following statement: "As a general rule we believe that a child responds as well as he is able to a well-planned and a well-taught classroom. If he is unable to co-operate, our staff makes a real effort to find the underlying causes for his problems even though we must temporarily control the symptoms." Another teacher states, "We try to find out why a child misbehaves and give him help."

The differences between the majority of the statements concerning the causes of children's misbehavior and most of the statements regarding the punishments generally used in schools, raise interesting questions such as those that follow:

1. Do teachers really understand as much about motivation as their replies indicate?
2. If they understand the causes of children's behavior why are so many of them unable to act upon their understanding?

Another interesting finding in this study was the degree to which teachers agree with their school principals regarding control and punishment. Few teachers indicated any disagreement. If the principal was severe and arbitrary, the teachers apparently liked it; if the principal was analytical in his approach, the teachers apparently thought the procedure good. The following are typical of the teachers' remarks regarding their principals:

This is my first year and so far I have not heard of one incident of punishment. We do not use the word punishment here; even negative criticism is frowned upon. Our principal feels that we should stress courtesy and expect each child to do the right thing. If a child goes against this philosophy we try to find out why. I agree with this point-of-view. It has worked. When I first came I insisted on using old methods but it is amazing how smoothly our school is run.

Our principal believes in strict discipline for all types of misbehavior. He does not tolerate a student disturbing a class. He will back a teacher one hundred per cent and we all agree with his point of view.

Our principal does not use force, he appeals to the child yet demands and holds his respect. He has a good sense of humor; he is also tactful with parents. I agree with his point-of-view.

I agree in general with my principal but I believe that there should be an authority above the teacher and a punishment that is more severe than she administers.

The principal expects the teacher to control her own group of children and I agree with him.

The nearly complete agreement of these teachers with their principals on the issue of control raises certain speculations as to the reasons for this agreement and the role of the principal in guiding his teachers.

OBSERVATIONS

1. Nearly all teachers who participated were able to express themselves well regarding the causes of children's behavior. Even though in many instances teachers apparently do not understand the basic causes of misbehavior, their ability to express themselves well shows that they have enough insight into human motivation that will continually inspire their methods of control.

2. Several teachers were actually using their understanding of the causes of misbehavior as indicated by the school action taken. Several schools established routine staff investigation into the causes of children's misbehavior. Other teachers seemed merely to have an air of inquiry but at least punishment was not entirely arbitrary. Even though this group of professionally minded teachers represents a minority in this study yet it is encouraging to see some teachers and some principals using an analytical rather than an arbitrary approach to children's behavior.

3. The most significant finding was the gap between many teachers' statements regarding causes of children's misbehavior and the disciplinary action taken. If this study is indicative of the range of understanding of teachers in California, still more help is needed than has been provided in recent years in both preservice and in-service education in the areas of child study, growth and development, and guidance techniques. The emphasis in the past two or three decades on children as people is showing in education but not showing enough in appropriate school administrative techniques and classroom practices. The difference

between "what we know and what we do" is glaringly apparent in this study. The implications are for more emphasis on the study of children and the meaning of the knowledge gained for methods of working with children.

4. Most teachers appear to need the security of their principals' authority. A large number of the teachers agree with their principal regardless of his point-of-view. This seems to indicate that the teachers respect the position of the principal regardless of his attitudes and they want his authoritative backing. This finding makes us wonder why teachers need the security provided by authority. Do certain teachers have no ideas of their own regarding control and punishment? Do many teachers respect status regardless of the policy it represents? Do teachers need authority? Whatever the reasons for teachers' non-analytical agreement with principals, the point is made clear that principals greatly influence teachers' feelings and actions. Principals usually establish the policies regarding the control of children. Principals frequently become surrounded with an "aura of authenticity" which most teachers accept. These attitudes of teachers place great responsibilities upon principals for assuring that their values and techniques represent the best that is known regarding human motivation and mental health.

WHAT DO STUDENTS PREPARING TO TEACH THINK ABOUT DISCIPLINE?

IRIS MARIE TIMSON, *Assistant Professor of Education, Los Angeles State College*, and ELIZABETH H. BRADY, *Associate Professor of Education, Los Angeles State College*

The development and use of effective methods of discipline is a major area of interest and concern by students who are preparing to teach. Each semester students ask for discussions of this topic, for explanations of how teachers should discipline, even for specific procedures which will guarantee control in their future classrooms. Typical comments regarding discipline follow:

A young woman in the child development class writes a note to the instructor: "Is it true that you have to spend so much time disciplining children that there isn't a chance to do any real teaching? If that's true, I don't know that I want to go into teaching. I don't like the idea of spending most of my energy just keeping control of children."

A young man in his first education class remarks, "I know some people who are teachers. They all say, 'Get control first; let your class know you mean business. Then you can worry about teaching them something.' But how do you make a class know you *are* in control?"

Such comments make it apparent that prospective teachers view discipline in different ways. Some of the differing perceptions that students had about discipline were related to the following four questions:

1. Do students in college classes have clear, expressible concepts of discipline?
2. To what extent are these expressed concepts of discipline related to present day knowledge about discipline?
3. To what extent do these concepts of discipline change as a result of a program of teacher education?
4. Is there any relationship between the expressed concept of discipline and such factors as sex, age, teaching experience, and being a parent?

To obtain answers to these questions students were asked to respond to the following statement: The problem of discipline has become a much discussed and controversial subject among teachers and parents.

What are your feelings, thoughts, and ideas about discipline? What do you think are the important values to consider in discipline?

Responses were obtained from students on the Ramona and San Fernando Valley campuses of Los Angeles State College. Of this group, 59 were enrolled in the initial testing and selection program (Education 100) and may or may not have taken other work in education; 68 in Psychological and Sociological Foundations of Education (Education 113), which is normally the first course in the education sequence; 56 in the block course in Principles, Curriculum, and Methods in Elementary Teaching (Education 112); 61 in advanced courses in Research in Methods (Education 211) and were at this time teaching in public schools; and 12 had student teaching assignments in elementary schools (Education 150). Information was obtained regarding age and sex of each respondent, whether he had had teaching experience of any sort, and whether he had children of his own.

To obtain answers to the first two questions, the responses were grouped into four different categories: (1) those that perceived the end results of discipline as self-discipline; (2) those in which control was perceived as coming from an external source; (3) those in which discipline was perceived as obedience to unquestioned authority; and (4) those which could not be classified under (1), (2) or (3).

Of the 256 students responding, 23.5 per cent stated that self-control is the goal of discipline; 65.5 per cent that some external control—parent, teacher, society, and the like—must discipline the child; 8.2 per cent that discipline is obedience to an unquestioned authority. Two per cent of the responses could not be classified.

Most of the responses were clear and forthright and seemed to indicate an inner conviction about discipline. Examples of responses classified as (1), (2) and (3) are given below:

SELF-DISCIPLINE

The important factor seems to be guiding children toward self-discipline not in merely disciplining for the school. Discipline is more than behaving well in school—it is learning to discipline a person's individual self in all experiences of life.

I see discipline as a means of guiding pupils into behavior patterns which will allow the greatest growth and success of potential individually possible. Most important is the development of self-discipline where the child establishes his standards (within the confines of the society) and is emotionally and intellectually able to maintain them.

EXTERNAL DISCIPLINE

Discipline begins in the home; the teacher deals with partly formed habits of discipline and attitudes of behavior. Regardless of background, however, teachers and administrators must insist on reasonably polite, reasonably "co-operative" behavior. At no age level should children be permitted to determine their own standards of behavior. They may indeed discuss them, but their actions must be within the bounds set by wiser, more experienced, more worldly elders.

Discipline, or more particularly, classroom and individual control is the largest and most enervating problem facing the teacher. Time and effort spent on control robs teacher and pupil of opportunity and achievement. While the good teacher is able to handle the problem well, he or she would do a much better job of teaching without such a problem.

Discipline as the intrinsic value in education is worthless, but its extrinsic value is immeasurable.

If children were properly prepared in the home, there would be no discipline problem in the school.

UNQUESTIONED AUTHORITY

The discipline problem should be primarily handled in the home. The teacher should, however, be more strict than he is in the school situation. Children should be taught respect for all adults and for their authority to discipline the children. The teacher shouldn't have to discipline as much as she does in the classroom.

Each school should have a full-time disciplinarian to take care of the discipline problems in the school. Teachers should be left free to teach and not police. Self-discipline might work if there were more parents at home when children came from school and few divorces. But imposed discipline must work until children are better reared.

Examples of responses that could not be classified were, "I have not thought about discipline and the problems I will encounter when I'm in a teaching situation." "I feel discipline is needed in the classroom only to the extent that a child is prevented from injuring himself or others or disrupting the class as a whole."

What was the relationship between ideas about discipline and sex, age, teaching experience, and having children. These data are presented in Table 1. The ratio of women to men was about the same (2 to 1) in the first two categories—self-discipline and external discipline. In the third category, unquestioned authority, the ratio of women to men was almost 3 to 1.

An examination of Table 2 suggests these additional questions for further study:

1. Is there a gradual increase in awareness of organization and method as a factor in discipline as the students progress through the teacher training program?

Table 1

PER CENT OF TEACHER-EDUCATION STUDENTS, CLASSIFIED BY SEX, AGE, TEACHING EXPERIENCE, AND WHETHER PARENTS, WHO PERCEIVED THE END RESULTS OF DISCIPLINE AS SELF DISCIPLINE, THOSE IN WHICH CONTROL WAS PERCEIVED AS COMING FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES, AND THOSE IN WHICH DISCIPLINE WAS PERCEIVED AS OBEDIENCE TO UNQUESTIONED AUTHORITY

	Self Discipline N=60	External Discipline N=168	Discipline Through Unquestioned Authority N=21
Sex			
Female.....	63.3	65.5	71.4
Male.....	36.6	34.5	28.6
Age			
18-25.....	23.3	33.9	9.5
25-35.....	38.3	36.9	57.1
35+.....	38.3	28.6	33.3
Teaching Experience			
yes.....	45.0	32.2	57.1
no.....	50.8	63.1	42.9
no report.....	3.2	4.2	----
Children			
yes.....	56.6	53.0	61.9
no.....	36.6	45.2	38.1
no report.....	6.6	1.2	----

2. Student teachers seem less concerned about the teacher role and more about child needs. Is this a function of the student teaching situation in which student teachers often report they don't feel that the class is theirs?
3. Is the emphasis on the psychology and understanding of children's behavior in the teacher training curriculum reflected in the tendency for these students to give more weight to teacher and child needs and classroom climate and less to standards and rules?

In Table 3 the responses were tabulated according to the classification used in Table 1. An analysis of Table 3 reveals the following:

1. There is an inverse relationship between concern for the individual child and his needs and concern for standards, rules, and the like.

2. The group believing in discipline as unquestioned authority, although small in number, did not recognize the group, group organization, or group methods as a factor in discipline.
3. This group also placed greatest emphasis on the influence and role of the home and the influence of reward and punishment.
4. Those who stressed discipline as external control gave most weight to the teacher role in discipline.

Table 2

**PER CENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS ENROLLED
IN FIVE EDUCATION COURSES WHO MENTIONED LISTED
FACTORS IN DISCIPLINE**

Factors	Ed. 100 N=59	Ed. 113 N=68	Ed. 112 N=56	Ed. 211 N=61	Ed. 150 N=12
Organization of curriculum and teaching methods.....	15.3	16.2	21.4	24.6	33.3
The Teacher: personality, values, needs, manner	22.0	35.3	33.9	21.3	8.3
Classroom climate.....	18.6	38.2	25.0	18.0	33.3
Individual child: needs, values, individual differences.....	44.0	55.9	51.8	36.0	66.6
The group.....	5.1	27.9	12.5	14.8	41.6
Home and parents.....	13.6	16.2	17.8	21.3	41.6
Standards, use of authority, rules, limits.....	52.5	47.0	48.2	52.3	41.6
Reward and punishment.....	28.8	27.9	7.1	21.3	33.3

Further examination of the responses suggests the following:

1. As students move through their education program, they do not develop a viewpoint about discipline consistent with what the education courses purport to teach.
2. Students incorporate certain concepts, such as understanding the individual child's problems into their responses without any visible change in their view of discipline.
3. Courses in education may not affect values and attitudes learned through experience.

Table 3
PER CENT OF STUDENTS IN EACH CATEGORY MENTION-
ING LISTED FACTORS IN DISCIPLINE

Factors	Self Discipline N=60	External Discipline N=168	Discipline Through Unquestioned Authority N=21
Organization of curricula and teaching methods....	24.6	21.9	4.7
The Teacher: personality, values, needs, manner.....	19.7	33.7	19.4
Classroom climate.....	26.2	27.4	19.4
Individual child: needs, values, individual differences.....	73.8	42.6	33.3
The group.....	24.6	10.0	0
Home and parents.....	16.4	21.9	38.1
Standards, use of authority, rules, limits.....	41.0	50.9	80.9
Reward and punishment...	24.6	13.0	38.1

The small number of responses and the subjective evaluation of the data limit the extent to which conclusions can be drawn with any degree of significance. However, these data do yield interesting findings which need further investigation. Others working with prospective teachers will find it fruitful to explore values and attitudes about discipline held by those who will have the responsibility of guiding children.

CHILDREN'S PERCEPTION OF ADULT BEHAVIOR

MABEL C. PURL, *Director of Research and Testing,
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All educators would undoubtedly agree that discipline has a significant and realistic place in the educational pattern. In addition there would be general acceptance of the basic philosophy that discipline in schools is for the fundamental purpose of helping children to develop increasing self-reliance, self-control, and self-direction. In the orderly progression toward developing this dimension of maturity, numerous occasions arise during which varying degrees of punishment are used to emphasize or support this particular kind of learning. Unquestionably there are other occasions when a teacher imposes punishment on an individual child in order to maintain control of the group or to achieve certain results with the class as a whole. Because teachers are human, punishment is meted out also as the result of annoyance, fatigue, apprehension, or uncertainty, and occasionally for revenge.

In exploring the dynamics of this phase of the educational scene, it seemed highly possible that children and their teachers might have different opinions regarding situations which should call for disciplinary action. "Right" and "wrong" might not mean the same thing to both. In an attempt to reveal this dichotomy, a series of short descriptive stories was prepared. These twelve stories briefly described typical school situations which might cause teachers to take some action. Following each story, the children were asked, "What do you think your teacher would do?" and "What would you do if you were the teacher?"

Three classes each of fourth, sixth, and eighth grades were chosen for the study. These classes were distributed as evenly as possible between men and women teachers, and no two classes at a given level were chosen from a single school. The teachers of the children involved were asked to react to the same stories by answering the question, "What would you do if you were the teacher?" The stories selected presented a variety of situations including cheating, fighting, general nuisance behavior, poor sportsmanship, obscene notes, stealing, sullen and resentful social behavior, cliques, refusal to do school work, nonparticipation in oral work, and bullying.

The stories used to secure pupil and teacher responses follow. Changes were made in stories 2, 10, 11, and 12 when the material was given to eighth grade pupils; in story 2 "fifth" was changed to "eighth," in story 10 "sixth" was changed to "eighth," in story 11 "eleven" was changed to "thirteen" and in story 12 "fourth," "fifth," and "sixth" were changed to "seventh," "eighth," and "ninth."

1. Beverly, who had difficulty with spelling, suddenly began to make 100 on every test. Her teacher discovered that Beverly was copying the spelling words lightly on the test page of her spelling workbook, then retracing them when the words were pronounced for the test.

2. John and Paul, fifth graders from different classrooms, had a water fight in the boys' lavatory during recess. Each denied starting the fight. Both boys were soaked and angry. The floor and walls of the bathroom were covered with water. Other boys were unable to use the bathroom without getting wet.

3. Gregory does good school work. However, he constantly upsets the classroom. When he walks to the front of the room to throw paper in the wastebasket, he grabs Jim's pencil, steps on Sue's foot, and cuffs Alex on the ear. Having attracted everyone's attention, he drops the trash on the floor beside the basket. Then, whistling loudly, he returns to his seat.

4. Kenneth, the ball monitor, was responsible for putting the tetherball up at recess times and for returning it to the supply cart. When the boys refused to give Kenneth an extra turn, he unfastened the ball and took it back to the office.

5. While the class was studying in small groups, Sara asked Carol to write a story from dictation. Sara then dictated a filthy story, using many foul words. Carol wrote the story, spelling correctly the words which she later claimed she did not understand. The teacher found the paper just as Sara was giving it to George.

6. Robert brought some magnets to school for a special science demonstration. During the afternoon the magnets disappeared. After a long search they were found hidden in Steve's social studies book. Steve denied taking the magnets and declared he had no idea how they got in his book.

7. Roger transferred into the school at about the middle of the semester. He refuses to participate in the class activities and does not do any of the assigned work. His test papers are blank and usually are wadded up and stuffed in his desk. He is sullen and resists any friendly overtures from the teacher or his fellow students.

8. Jane, Mary, and Linda are attractive, well-dressed girls. They do excellent school work and enjoy helping the teacher or principal. On the playground they band together and refuse to associate with other children. Instead they remain apart, making secret plans, or walk around the grounds making insulting remarks about the play activities of other girls.

9. While the class worked on arithmetic problems, Arthur made an elaborate design with his compass and ruler. During social studies period he read a comic book which he hid inside his textbook. When others were studying for a spelling test, he cleaned out his desk. Arthur's teacher said he must remain after school to make up the day's work, but he slipped out and went home.

10. Each student in the sixth grade was asked to learn and recite a poem or short selection in celebration of Arbor Week. The week's grade in English was

to be based on this recitation. Julia, who did superior written work, refused to participate in spite of much urging, and burst into tears when the teacher said her grade for the week would be 0.

11. Eleven-year-old Richard is much larger and stronger than the other boys at school. Hardly a day passes that he does not have trouble with someone. He denies that he is at fault and claims that the other boys have pushed him, called him names, or cheated at games. His reaction is to hit, and he has caused many bloody noses and cut cheeks "defending himself."

12. The school safety council is made up of representatives chosen from the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade rooms. Jack, a member of the council, has been observed showing favoritism toward his friends and is not reporting their offenses.

WHAT TEACHERS SAY

Analysis of the answers given by the teachers reveals the expected range of individual techniques. Some teachers seemed to favor individual guidance through private talks with the erring student, while others preferred group discussion and counseling with little or no individual contact at least for first offenses. Each teacher revealed a good background of psychological theory and used this quite freely in deciding what action he would take in response to these specific situations. It must be recognized that these responses are intellectualizations based on training and experience and are not decisions made "in the heat of battle." Almost unanimously the emphasis in each situation was on concern for basic attitudes rather than surface behavior. Most of this small group of teachers seemed to expect to handle the situations with little outside help. However, one eighth grade teacher indicated that in almost every incident he would send the offender to the office. It is impossible to state whether this is the policy of his particular school or the result of his concept of the teaching role. It is also unknown whether such trips to the principal result in trained counseling or in punitive action.

WHAT STUDENTS SAY

In analyzing the responses of the students to the questions, marked agreement is found between what each student believes his teacher would do in each circumstance and what he believes he would do if he were the teacher. Interestingly enough, there is little similarity between what the student feels his teacher would do and what the teacher himself has indicated as his probable action. Possibly the child in the schoolroom is aware only of the immediate overt action taken by his teacher and either ignores or is unaware of the following guidance done in private with the individual child.

In attempting to understand the agreement between the child's choice of action and that which he believes his teacher would take, it is difficult to say whether he outlines certain behavior because he believes it is the appropriate and fair thing to do or because he recognizes it as the expected reaction of teachers. One gathers the impression that such behavior might not be his choice as an individual child, but rather the behavior he would follow were he cast in the role of teacher. This expressed behavior may reflect action he has observed or experienced over a period of years rather than his selection of ideal treatment.

In comparison to the disciplinary methods which teachers themselves profess to employ, the answers from children indicate widespread use of techniques such as extra assignments, copying pages from the dictionary, writing "I will not . . ." hundreds of times, banishment into the hall, and writing essays (as one boy replied, "My teacher would make him write an S.A.").

FOURTH GRADE RESPONSES

For each described incident, as stated above, the majority of children at each grade level state they would take the same disciplinary action that they believe their teachers would choose. In addition, there are many children who indicate that they would be more punitive and many who feel that they would be more sympathetic. At the fourth grade level, when children do not agree with the behavior they expect from their teachers, in every situation there are more individuals who would be more punitive. A lesser number indicate that they would attempt more sympathetic action. A few hostile individuals consistently prescribe extreme punishment in each case, although only rarely does any child suggest sympathetic or therapeutic treatment to a high degree.

RESPONSES OF OLDER STUDENTS

At the sixth and the eighth grade levels the same pattern of responses continues except for the responses to three particular stories. One of these describes the apparent theft of magnets belonging to a boy who had brought them for use in a science demonstration. The magnets were later found hidden in the book of a second boy who denied knowing anything about them. While the fourth graders believed that the teacher should punish the suspected culprit, the sixth grade children felt that the teacher would be inclined to investigate more carefully, and if guilt were established to help the boy understand and overcome

this type of behavior. The eighth graders failed to emphasize any sympathetic guidance on the part of the teacher, but rather merely indicated that since no proof was available, the matter would be dropped. At all three grade levels, this particular story brought forth decided opinions on fairness from the pupils. The frequency of statements such as, "Poor Steve might be the victim of a practical joker. It would be unfair to punish him without more proof," indicates that the sense of fair play is highly developed in upper elementary school children.

The second story which causes the responses of sixth and eighth graders to differ from those given by younger students portrays an unhappy boy who has entered school late in the semester. He is described as refusing to do assignments or participate in class activities, as sullen and unfriendly. Again the fourth grade children view this behavior as unacceptable and recommend punishment. The sixth graders, however, recognize this as the result of many factors which need study and sympathetic understanding. The general reaction to this story is exemplified by the following statement: "If I were the teacher, I would try to be friends. I would talk to his parents and then tell the children in the classroom not to lose patience." The eighth graders are even more sympathetic with such a student. Only an occasional pupil indicates that he or his teacher would use any punishment at all, while various techniques for winning the boy's confidence and enlisting parental co-operation are given. Several times referral to a child guidance clinic or to a psychiatrist is suggested.

This same development of sympathetic understanding for children with problems of an emotional nature was indicated by responses to a story of a superior girl student who was unable to present an oral recitation before the class. The older boys and girls understood that this represented more than disobedience and advised help and encouragement. In spite of this sympathetic feeling, however, students in the eighth grade indicated a greater recognition of the importance and pressure of "grades," and while feeling sorry for the girl, believed that if she couldn't perform she should be marked down.

CONCLUSIONS

Such clues as can be gathered from such a study seem to show that as children advance through the school grades they attain increasing amounts of understanding of the behavior of others. They also interpret and judge this behavior in terms of more intangible factors than overt

expression and have greater degrees of empathy and acceptance for their fellow students. However, by the middle of the junior high school years, most students have acquired a realistic impression of the omnipotence of school grades and marks as a ruling factor in their educational lives.

While reading the responses written by these groups of pupils, one receives certain repeated impressions. The children seem to perceive of discipline as something imposed on them by their teachers or principals. Only rarely does a child recognize, or at least express the recognition, that the attainment of self-control is something for which he must assume some responsibility. The frequency with which children would refer and believe their teachers would refer offenders to the principal raises questions concerning the role of the chief administrator in many schools.

Apparently there is a general recognition and acceptance of the practice of encouraging close co-operation between school and home. Children make frequent mention of this and seem to believe in it.

PARENTS' PERCEPTION OF SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

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In discussing discipline and the young with adults it is difficult to determine whether criticism and disapproval centers in change or represents a sort of envy of the irresponsible young by the harassed and demand-laden older generations. Certainly the major criticisms of the lack of respect for elders and the authority they represent, the frivolity and waywardness of youth, and their lack of industry, civility, and reverence are well documented in the recorded history of most cultures. Both early-day and present-day teachers have all been taken to task for being derelict in inculcating these qualities in the children in their charge.

The goals of respect for elders and for authority of industry, civility, and reverence have not changed appreciably. Rather, the change has involved the ways and means of achieving these goals. Nineteenth century discipline was based upon authority and instant and unquestioned obedience. If this was questioned by children, it was done silently because "children should be seen and not heard." Children were looked upon as miniature adults; their manners, demeanor, and dress made this apparent. Discipline was stern and rigid. However, the introduction of the kindergarten, the child studies and teachings of G. Stanley Hall, the educational philosophy of Francis W. Parker, and the organization of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers around the turn of the century helped in the recognition of the child as an individual with ability to think and reason, and in time, to control his own behavior.

The past three or four generations have seen a steady movement toward a freer, more permissive type of discipline wherein respect for the individual as a person is basic. Authority has generally been recognized as stemming from a principle rather than a person and obedience thereto as growing out of intelligent willingness. More concern has been shown for children's underlying thoughts, feelings, and motives.

Teaching and training in discipline at home and in the school have sought to help the individual achieve self-discipline, self-control, and self-direction.

WHAT SHOULD DISCIPLINE DO?

If the ultimate aim of discipline is to help children develop capacity for self-direction and self-management, it seems logical to suppose that they must have enough freedom to practice in this regard. One of the most difficult decisions for parents to make concerns the degree of freedom to grant in varying circumstances. At one extreme one finds little freedom. This is easy to administer and avoids the necessity of frequent decisions. At the other extreme one finds freedom circumscribed only by complaints—frequently complaints by authoritative agencies. The middle course sees the prudent use of freedom as the main goal of discipline and recognizes that freedom calls for more self-discipline than regimentation.

Freedom does not extend to license. Obedience is a necessary part of discipline, but most parents seek complete obedience only in matters involving the personal safety of their children and of others. In other situations parents are inclined to recognize the distinction between children being obedient to them and children being obedient to what they have learned is right. Parents seem to prefer the latter and indicate that agreed-upon rules are helpful in establishing reasoned obedience. Parents say they believe that mutual confidence and trust in the family relationships enable children to obey cheerfully, to observe the necessary rules, and to accept the responsibility for their actions. The same confidence and trust in teacher-pupil relationships produces like results. The opposite of trust and confidence, of course, is fear. Fear and threat are common control devices. Their excessive use, however, is apt to encourage mere avoidance. It is doubtful if this is a desired outcome of discipline.

To determine the extent of differences in parents' perception of discipline in public elementary schools, questionnaires were submitted to 150 parents in seven northern California communities. The questionnaires asked parents for a general evaluation of discipline in the elementary schools and for some indication of things that influenced the opinions they expressed. These parents were also asked to state what action they considered appropriate in each of a series of brief descriptions of school situations in which it might be necessary for the teacher to take some type of disciplinary action. Teachers and

pupils were asked to state what action they considered appropriate for each of the situations mentioned and for others described.¹

Parents and teachers alike frequently commented upon the importance of consistency in discipline. Some interpreted this to mean the same punishment for the same offense or even the same punishment for the same offense for all children in the family or in the classroom. The majority, however, limited the interpretation of "consistency" to method and attitude and allowed for some variation according to the situation and recognized that frequently there are extenuating circumstances. Parents reported that inconsistencies as to method and attitude between the parents themselves confuse children and adversely affect their response to discipline. Inconsistencies between discipline and control practices at home and in the school often have the same adverse effects.

In response to the question: "What kind of a job do you think elementary schools in general are doing in the area of discipline?" about twice as many parents stated that they thought the schools were doing a good job as stated they thought the schools were doing a poor job. However, approximately half of the parents reported it as an "average" job. They recognized that schools differ in this regard even as do individual teachers, and they frequently acknowledged that parents share in the over-all shortcomings cited. Typical comments were: "Not the school's fault—we have failed to give them enough authority"; "schools are doing a passing job of discipline considering the limitations put on them by indifferent parents, over-crowded classes, and general lack of respect"; "if children were taught self-control and respect at home, discipline would not be a problem at school."

Teachers are only one factor in school discipline. Each child is influenced by many factors within and without himself. Also each parent, through his or her own unique life experiences, holds attitudes about school discipline that may differ from those held by other parents. In part, these differences may be attributed to the varied sources of information from which parents form their opinions about school discipline. For example, parents whose children attended elementary public schools were asked: "What do you think influences parents the most in forming their opinions about school discipline?" Their replies included information obtained from children, teachers, school visitations,

¹ Results obtained are reported in Mabel C. Purl, "Children's Perception of Adult Behavior," *California Journal of Elementary Education*, XXVII (August, 1958), 22. (This issue).

newspapers and magazines, other parents, friends, report cards, and their own experiences in schools. Of these sources of information reactions obtained from children were mentioned most frequently. These reactions were based upon two types of situations—what children said and the way they behaved away from school. A typical comment of the first situation would be: "I listen to my children as they tell how they conduct themselves in the classrooms, how the teacher reacts, and what measures are taken to correct them when they misbehave."

On the other hand some parents seem to form their opinions in the following manner: "I observe the children at play in the neighborhood and their attitudes toward one another, respect of other children's ideas and opinions, and their ways of sharing toys and other playthings."

Parents who reported that teachers were their source of information about school discipline reflected both favorable and unfavorable reactions. A response typical of the favorable reactions stated: "It depends on how well the parents know the teacher. If the parents take the time to go to school and really talk to the teacher, I believe the parents would realize what a good job the teachers are doing."

Unfavorable reactions were made by a minority of the parents who indicated teachers as their information source. The following statement is typical of the responses made by this group: "Parents do not like belligerent teachers. When they find one like that they take their children's part in any matter."

School visitations also reflect a range in parent reactions to discipline in the schools. Again, most of the reactions were favorable. For example, many said that "When visiting the school you can see that the children are well-behaved—yet have a freedom of expression."

A few school visitations left parents with this impression: "When the parent comes into the classroom and children are out of their seats and low discussions are being carried on while the teacher is talking, the parent is influenced unfavorably. Work periods should be a quiet time."

None of the parents who designated newspapers and magazines as the sources of information upon which they formed their opinions about school discipline held favorable opinions.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Several groups of parents were asked to react to a series of brief descriptions of situations which could result in some type of disciplinary

action by the teacher. In each of five situations² the parent was requested to describe the type of disciplinary action that he felt should be taken.

Situation I

Beverly, who had difficulty with spelling, suddenly began to make 100 on every test. Her teacher discovered that Beverly was copying the spelling words lightly on the test page of her spelling workbook, then retracing when the words were pronounced for the test.

A wide range of responses was elicited from parents to this situation. A conference between the teacher and Beverly and suggestions relating to ways of improving Beverly's spelling and thus improve her confidence were the two types of suggestions made most frequently. Other suggestions included careful preparation of testing procedures in order to prohibit cheating possibilities, giving the pupil a failing grade in spelling, keeping the child after school, holding a conference between the teacher and parent, having Beverly apologize to the class, having her write "I won't cheat" a hundred times, prohibiting the girl from taking spelling tests, sending her to the principal's office, and in future spelling lessons assigning twice as many words to Beverly as to her classmates.

Despite the range in types of suggestions most of the suggested actions included pupil-teacher conferences and some type of remedial action to improve her spelling. Ways of making cheating more difficult and giving the pupil a failing grade were suggested next in frequency.

Typical responses that show a range in the type of disciplinary action that parents felt should be taken is shown below:

I don't feel that this is a situation where disciplinary action is called for. Beverly should be talked to privately by her teacher. The child should be given encouragement to do her own spelling words even if she is able to spell only a few correctly.

See that she is given additional help with her spelling so that she could get confidence in her spelling ability. Do not stress the cheating episode but help her see the wrong she could do herself.

Give her zero in spelling for copying. I think most children who were not given a passing grade would hesitate the second time before cheating in a test.

Keep her pencils on the teacher's desk until time for written tests.

Situation II

John and Paul, fifth graders from different classrooms, had a water fight in the boys' bathroom during recess. Each denied starting the fight. Both boys were

² These situations are taken from the study made by Mabel C. Purl published in this issue.

soaked and angry. The floor and walls were covered with water. Other boys were unable to use the bathroom without getting wet.

When parents were asked what disciplinary measures should be taken in this situation a very large majority adopted a "boys will be boys" attitude. They felt the boys should be required to clean up the mess they had made. Their clothing should be dried and the incident dismissed after a conference with their teachers. Other responses indicated that privileges at school be taken away, a conference be held between the teacher and the boys' parents, the boys should be kept after school and made to write one hundred times that they will not do this again, the boys should be sent home to their parents, the boys should be sent to the principal's office and spanked, John and Paul should apologize to their classmates, and be lectured by the principal. One parent suggested that the boys' parents should clean up the mess made by the boys.

Situation III

Gregory does good school work. However, he constantly upsets the classroom. When he walks to the front of the room to throw paper in the wastebasket, he grabs Jim's pencil, steps on Sue's foot, and cuffs Alex on the ear. Having attracted everyone's attention, he drops the trash on the floor beside the basket. Then, whistling loudly, he returns to his seat.

Again a wide range of responses was made. Among suggestions were that Gregory's desk be moved to an isolated corner of the classroom; that it be determined whether the classroom learning activities were interesting and challenging to him; that the boy be assigned additional homework; a special "showoff" period be provided for him in front of his classmates; extra duties or responsibility in the school be given him in order to help him attract favorable attention from his school mates; that he be spanked, sent to the principal's office, kept after school, be made to write one hundred times that he won't annoy others; that he memorize some poems, and that he be suspended from school. Despite the number of different kinds of responses most of the suggestions were included in the first four suggestions above.

Parents who suggested that Gregory be moved made comments similar to the one that follows:

Gregory should be made to sit in the front row and not allowed to leave his seat at any time during class period. If this doesn't work, his desk should be moved to a place where he is completely alone—in the hallway if necessary.

Other parents made the following suggestions.

This boy is bored. He needs more interesting and challenging things to do—and perhaps a bit of sadly needed extra attention, especially when he doesn't do something well.

I could forgive a teacher for anything she did to this kind of a child. But probably the more she can ignore such incidents and the more attention she can throw this child's way for acceptable behavior, the better it will be for the class and for the child. The cause for this behavior should be investigated, because it has been my experience that only those people who are dissatisfied with themselves behave in this manner. The adult version of this behavior is even more maddening, and the child should be helped to overcome his difficulty.

Situation IV

Robert brought some magnets to school for a special science demonstration. During the afternoon the magnets disappeared. After a long search they were found hidden in Steve's social studies book. Steve denied taking the magnets and declared he had no idea how they got in his book.

Parents again made suggestions that covered a wide range of disciplinary actions. However, a very large majority of the responses indicated that the parents would not punish Steve because his "guilt" was based upon inconclusive evidence. They felt the accusation of stealing was serious business. The teacher must be absolutely sure before confronting a pupil with an accusation of theft. Other responses included suggesting a teacher-parent conference with precaution to keep the nature of the conference from Steve's classmates, a conference by the teacher with Robert and Steve about need for better care of equipment, punishment for the entire class, essays on honesty by Steve, take privileges at school away from Steve, an apology by Steve to the class, the boy be sent to the principal's office, Steve be spanked, and the boy and his parents required to appear in juvenile court.

Situation V

Russell was a large boy who was repeating the sixth grade. He had become somewhat of a leader for two or three younger boys in the class, and one day when the teacher told him to "stop whispering and get busy," Russell told the teacher to "jump in the lake." He went on to say that _____ was a "lousy" school, that she was a "lousy" teacher, and that the rest of the class thought so too.

Although a wide range of responses was made, most of the responses indicated somewhat stern courses of action. A majority of the reactions by parents indicated that the boy should be sent to the principal's office, or suspended from school. The third most frequently mentioned course of action was a suggestion that a careful review be made of why Russell was not promoted from the sixth grade the previous year and the effects of this nonpromotion on his present behavior. Other parental recom-

mentations suggested a conference be held with the boy's parents, boy be spanked, Russell be referred to the school psychologist, special attention and responsibilities be given him, a conference be held with the boy and his teacher, Russell be assigned to a class for the mentally retarded, the boy be ignored—"he's just a showoff," the boy's privileges be restricted at school, and failing grades be given in all his subjects.

Typical comments that show the variety of ways parents reacted to Russell's behavior in Situation V follow:

I can't much blame this boy. He is probably right. Action should be taken so that the child would be placed where he would feel that he isn't a complete wash-out. If the situation is beyond the control of the teacher, she should make every effort to make the boy feel that she is his friend and that he can do what is expected of him. This incident should be treated as a 'blow-up' which might clear the air. Adults 'blow their stacks' too occasionally.

I feel in all cases of this kind the parents should be informed of the situation. The parents, teacher, and the boy should discuss this together and decide upon appropriate action.

Obviously this cannot be permitted. One of the greatest problems with juveniles today is rebellion and lack of respect for authority. I would recommend stern punishment even for a first offense of this nature.

No teacher should have to listen to such expressions in front of her class. In a case like this the boy should be sent immediately to the principal's office and kept there until he promises not to do it again.

Refer him to a psychologist.

After repeating a grade a teacher shouldn't be required to waste her time on a student who possesses such an attitude. He should be transferred to a special school or class.

I would suggest an old fashioned 'whaling,' either by the teacher or principal.

Either make Russell behave and act like a gentleman immediately or suspend him from school indefinitely.

SUMMARY

Parent responses to the five situations presented here underline the existence of a wide range of action parents deemed appropriate. Some reactions were consistently punitive in nature. Others reflected a *laissez-faire* attitude. Although there was a tendency to use the words "discipline" and "punishment" interchangeably, parents generally recognized punishment as only a part of the larger concept of discipline. As one parent put it, "You have to know why you are blowing the whistle on what they're doing, and then you have to decide what you're going to do about it." The parents were generally sensitive to punishments which held a child up for scorn, ridicule, or embarrassment.

They repeatedly pointed out that the manner in which the punishment was put into effect might be as important as the punishment itself.

The discipline of children has been beset in recent years by many new and complicating considerations. It seems that the more we have learned about children, the more our ideas change. Despite an apparent wide difference of opinion among parents regarding concepts of discipline, a majority of the parents emphasized the importance of considering underlying causes of behavior rather than treating symptoms. In some instances parents emphasized a belief that skills in self-control have to be learned by the same educative processes utilized in the skills of reading or problem solving in arithmetic. These parents felt that the optimum discipline is developed in the child himself and is self-imposed.

The variations that may be noted among all the responses made by the parents were unquestionably caused by multiplicity of conditions. Whether this range in opinion is a hindrance to remedial action by school personnel in matters relating to discipline is open to question. But before any co-ordinated efforts between home and school can be undertaken it cannot be concluded that in each instance mutual understandings and opinions exist. Of all the bridges between the school and the home personal conferences that include teachers, parents, and the child are the oldest and most widely used. But to serve successfully as instruments of guidance these conferences between school personnel and family must give a clear picture of the nature of the child's behavior in school, recommend remedial action deemed mutually appropriate, and encourage co-ordinated follow-up action. Each parent, child, and teacher brings to these conferences his own peculiar set of habits and related ideas, attitudes, and value system. The uniqueness of each of these persons does not imply a lack of order and unity of purpose. There is doubtless a variety of fundamental frames of reference centered chiefly in the major motives or desires of doing what is best for all concerned in that particular situation. Perhaps it should be emphasized again to school faculties that many parents seem to hold considerable confidence in school-home conferences as action appropriate to aid children grow in self-control.

METHODS OF CONTROL TEACHERS FIND MOST EFFECTIVE

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Teachers feel the need to discuss discipline, to share practices, and to extend their points of view. In one unified school district, 25 teachers from 11 schools met as an informal study group to discuss their own attitudes about control and to report individual and group investigations from their schools. Some of these teachers were also enrolled in a district-sponsored university extension course, *Discipline and Control in the Modern School*.

The faculties of the two junior high schools worked on projects designed to help the staff of a school to reach common agreements. In each of the schools, a committee took the lead in arranging informal discussions, securing books and articles, inviting consultants for specific tasks, and interviewing teachers and students. The committee in one of the schools developed a comprehensive questionnaire to determine teachers' opinions and attitudes toward control in the classroom and in the total school setting. In completing this questionnaire the teachers expressed their beliefs regarding the various problems involved in handling discipline as shown in the following tabulation.

STATUS OF DISCIPLINE IN THE SCHOOL	Unde-		
	Yes	No	cided
Teachers have better control now than in the past	23	7	18
I'm worried about over-all school discipline and control	15	30	4
NEED FOR UNIFORMITY IN ADMINISTERING DISCIPLINE			
I feel the faculty is uniform in enforcement of control regulations	6	41	4
I feel we need this evaluation of over-all control	38	4	8

¹ The following teachers in the Montebello Unified School District helped to prepare the material used in this article: Virginia Bankson, Gertrude Cole, George Cunningham, Frances Gandall, Robert Henke, Martha Hossack, Vera Klein, Barbara Mason, Raub Mathias, Helen Neftzger, Ruth Peggat, Gertrude Potts, Deidre Shaw, Elizabeth Spelman, Frank Zelmaney.

	Yes	No	Unde- cided
GUIDANCE OF LEARNING AS CONTROL OF DISCIPLINE			
Good control may be defined as an orderly learning atmosphere	43	5	2
Good preparation is the most effective tool for classroom control	40	4	4
Control depends directly upon the number of students motivated to learn	33	8	10
Control is the creation and preservation of conditions essential to work	46	0	3
NOISE A MEASURE OF CONTROL			
A "noisy classroom" indicates a lack of control	4	37	6
A quiet classroom indicates good control	7	35	4
Classroom noise is justified when the purpose is valid	47	2	1
CLASSROOM CONTROL A PRODUCT OF THE QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIPS			
The difference in class atmosphere often determines the degree of control a teacher has	40	1	4
Class response to discipline is relative to the group's fear of the consequences of poor behavior	17	24	8
Class response to discipline is relative to personal loyalty to the teacher	25	12	13
Class response to control is relative to the group's freedom	20	15	13
The teacher should always be the dominant personality of the classroom group	21	16	11
SELF-CONTROL IS LEARNED CONTROL			
Control means a well developed (inner) self-control	46	3	3
Self-control is instinctive	8	42	0
Self-control reflects learned social behavior	48	0	1
Self-control must be taught	48	1	1
The degree of permissiveness should depend on the class' psychological make-up	42	3	3
Most students understand the necessity for control and safety rules and regulations	42	5	2
There is some appreciable carry-over from learning of school rules to the affinity for social conformity	44	1	4

	Yes	No	Uncided
Parents are usually responsible for the undisciplined behavior of children.....	33	8	10
Counselor guidance should be preventive in function.....	32	7	10

In one elementary school, two teachers devised a control check list by using methods of control that had been described by the teachers during their informal discussions. Some of the methods were being used by teachers in the school; others were those the teachers had encountered as pupils or had heard described. This check list was completed by all the teachers and the following results tabulated:

FREEDOM WITHIN SET LIMITS		Yes	No
Child must hold up his hand to get out of his seat.....		7	17
Child may get out of his seat when he is finished with his work.....		16	7
Child may talk to his neighbor if he needs help.....		21	3
Child must raise his hand and ask the teacher for help....		17	7
Child may talk freely during discussions.....		9	14
Child must raise his hand to talk during discussions.....		17	7

PUNITIVE OR COERCIVE METHOD EMPLOYED

Have the child stand at attention facing the wall.....	2	22
Send the child to a lower grade to learn how to act.....	1	25
Give the child additional work.....	6	18
Have the child stand in the corner.....	4	20
Have a child stand with his nose on a dot facing the blackboard.....	0	24
Have the child stand on a piece of paper.....	1	22
Have him write a sentence so many times—Example: I will be quiet.....	6	17

RATIONAL AND CONSTRUCTIVE GUIDANCE METHODS EMPLOYED

	Yes	No
Seat the child in the back of the room.....	22	2
Have the child put his head down.....	16	8
Talk to the child and try to reason with him.....	23	0
Take away his free time.....	15	7

Several teachers kept records of the behavior of an unusual child or of all the children in a class. One record made by a first grade teacher follows:

Johnny, my discipline problem, has always been a problem. Given to sudden bursts of temper with complete lack of self-control. When things do not please him he threatens to leave school and several times did run away. On the playground when asked by teacher to 'come here' always runs the other way. I would go after him—and he would scamper further. I found myself pursuing him over and over again. One day he ran down the corridor and out the front of the grounds—across the street on the run without pausing or looking. This brought me to my senses as I realized what might have happened to him. I made arrangements with the office to let them know when he left—and I just let him go with no comment.

First time he left in a wild rage—he came back in about ten minutes—peeked in door—when I went to greet him, away he went. Later (2 or 3 minutes) peeking in again, this time no one paid attention. Went to back door, peeked in windows. We did many amusing things so we could laugh, played games, did work on board that he loves, while he lingered outside.

Kindergarten teacher came by to volunteer to take my class while I tended to Johnny. She had been trying to get him to come in. At noon when all were in cafeteria he got his lunch and joined them. Came in after lunch recess and settled down to work with nothing said.

On another day he pushed in line—told to go to end—away he ran. When we lined up for lunch shoved in again. I told him to go to the end so wouldn't push the others so—would have more room—he jumped out of line, called me several very choice words and said he was sick of the whole school and was going home. Away he started while the other children stood and gasped 'Mrs. C. did you hear what he said? Did you hear what he called you?' I said 'Let's go eat lunch' and we sauntered to the cafeteria. I went back to report his absence and found the office had snagged him as he went by and someone had told him to go lie down and rest a while. This he had done (as an easy way of getting out of difficulty) but when I came in he realized the truth would come out and out he ran and down to the cafeteria. Principal said 'Let him go.' I said 'No, I didn't think he should be allowed to eat with the others as they were very disturbed over his actions.' We went together, took him aside in another room, talked to him quietly and he went to the office to eat as we explained to him that the other children did not like the way he acted. He had nothing to say and slammed the door as he left. Later joined the children and came to class.

Next day started out day very cross—within a half hour was upset. Came to reading circle—read aloud a page and made three mistakes. I made helpful hints on board with these three words for ways to remember them, we all worked on them, and then I said 'Johnny, would you like to read that page over again?' He slammed his book, yelled 'No' at me and sprawled across his chair. I quietly said 'I think maybe you need to go somewhere else to work today then.' I chose a reading group leader and said 'Let's go down and see if there's a place for you somewhere else.' He came willingly as he loves to go to the office. Principal found him a spot—I sent some work down for him and he stayed there all day. Many times he asked to come back and she said no. 'I want to see what they're doing' he would say.

We found out this afternoon that father and mother have been quarreling violently during the last week or two. Father is out of work, at home, and making trouble.

In reviewing the record, members of the study group brought up the questions that follow:

1. Do adults by their own reactions sometimes force children to adopt undesirable behaviors? Johnny's pattern of flight subsided as the teacher no longer pursued him.
2. Could explosive behavior be minimized by avoiding direct requests when possible? The teacher's question "Would you like to read that page over," for instance, seemed to provoke resistance.
3. Do we sometimes make unwarranted assumptions about the other children's reactions? Their questions, "Did you hear what he said? What he called you?" may be more a way of testing and understanding the teacher's point of view than an expression of shock.
4. Can we provide an easy way out or ways of "saving face" for the child who is explosive and uncontrolled?

The teachers in one of the elementary schools in the district reported numerous factors of control that produced conflicts on the playground. They stated that since children were not closely supervised in out-of-school play that their behavior at school was characteristically impulsive. The teachers also reported that they were increasingly playing the role of policemen and that when remonstrated with, the children seemed able to recite the rules but "just forgot." In the study group discussion, the idea was suggested that perhaps the environment was not suitable for the development of children's self-control. Could changes be made so as to encourage desired rather than undesirable behaviors? A committee was asked to observe on the playground and to see whether rearranging materials could prevent conflicts leading to discipline problems. A few instances of changes which solved problems in playground discipline follow:

1. We had lots of problems with older children teasing younger ones. Our school is small and all used the same playground. The solution to this problem was a painted line dividing grounds—bright orange. It solves many an argument—this is it!
2. There was a good deal of trouble with children running up and down outside corridors. "Walk" was painted on the floor about every ten feet, as a reminder. It has helped, at least for a while.
3. The children were going the wrong way on ladder bars and creating confusion. One end of ladder bar was painted green—other end red, for go and stop. No more arguments.
4. Arguments over use of tether balls and "four-squares" were stopped by having one pole for each grade. No one else uses it except at physical education time. Same with "four-square" spaces.

5. Chasing over the benches was stopped by moving the benches up against the buildings as much as possible.

6. We have two shuffleboard courts and horseshoe courts. Tournaments keep the boys and girls playing near one another but not getting into conflicts.

A teacher of mentally retarded children in one of the junior high schools experimented with group control in the form of a court as suggested by the pupils. A class court grew spontaneously last year from suggestions originating with the pupils themselves, not from an idea planted by the teacher. After group discussion they decided to set up a court which would judge misbehavior and set penalties. The class president, vice president, and two or three other elected pupils were to make up the court. Rules for behavior were discussed and agreed upon and were amended as need arose. Some typical rules were: No running in the room. Push chairs quietly. No eating in the room. Sit on chairs, not tables.

Court action was usually restricted to times when the teacher was out of the room or occupied in a small group activity. The teacher served as adviser on procedures and the fairness of penalties. Pupils were often inclined to make penalties too severe so the teacher often needed to influence them toward leniency. The teacher needed to ease tensions at times by taking certain decisions out of the jurisdiction of the court.

The court organization helped girls and boys to feel more responsible for their own behavior and for influencing that of others. It helped to take control out of the 'pupils against the teacher' category. The pupils became more aware through discussion of the reasons and the need for rules of behavior and more willing to try to adhere to the rules. It was always stressed that rules are to protect the property of others and of the school and to help protect others' rights to study and learn unhampered. It became a social learning situation for the class. Girls and boys seemed to establish more socially acceptable behavior and good behavior was taken as a matter of course.

The court organization also had some disadvantages and hazards. Animosities arose temporarily between pupils who had been penalized and members of the court. "Tale-bearing" might be encouraged but this was not entirely bad; the code about "never telling on anyone" might lean a bit toward gangsterism. Group pressure might be too hard on certain individuals unless the teacher was deft in guidance and used incidents to help the children perceive the causes of behavior and its effects upon others' feelings.

Sixth grade children were asked to write their ideas about improving their classroom. Some of their responses follow:

—Our class can be better by listening to the teacher when she is in front of the room and by behaving when she is out of the room.

—Our classroom can be improved if everyone in the room raises his hand.

—Put one pupil in the back of the room and one in the front. And then the last places are the other rooms and the office.

—I think the best kind of discipline is to take privileges away.

—We could stop talking and maybe stop acting up when you want us to be quiet.

—When you sent the kids that talked out of the door or to the office, I stopped talking and it helped me a lot.

—It is unfair to the class when one person talks and the whole class has to stay. They don't care about others.

—I think there should be homework for people who can't behave.

—The teacher should be stricter.

—The teacher talks too much. Once she explains something to us she keeps on with it, on and on.

—You should not embarrass children. Like when Marilyn was sent to the office, I don't think it was fair because at that age you embarrass children like that. I wish you had put her name on the board and made her stay after school and then sent her to the office.

—The kids should be proud to be in Room 4 and should respect the president and the teacher. If the people would co-operate they would get more freedom.

—Children would be good if the teacher gave them homework or made them stay after school 10 or 15 minutes, that would teach them.

—We should line up more quietly and listen better.

—The teacher should talk louder if the people talk and she should keep talking. She should give them work to last the whole day.

A fifth grade teacher and her class developed standards from the citizenship items on the report card. A problem box is one of the ways in which this class clarifies its understanding of class standards and shares many other kinds of concerns. Each Friday, all problems in the box are discussed at length, with pupils offering many possible solutions for individual problems. Clearer understanding of school expectations has proved to be an effective preventive measure for discipline problems.

An elementary school with a large turnover in pupil population established a transition room several years ago. All new children are assigned to this room. Here the teacher becomes acquainted with them and their families, helps them to explore the school and meet school

personnel, administers tests, and prepares information for the regular classroom teachers. During the week or two a child is in this room he makes friends on the playground with children whom he will later find in his classroom. He becomes familiar with the school and neighborhood and has the security of starting school with his brothers and sisters. The work of the transition room might be divided into three parts: (1) tests for academic placement, mental maturity, and personal-social adjustment are given; (student achievement is not measured by tests alone, but also by the judgment of the transition room teacher); (2) referrals are made for guidance help, special training, special placement, speech correction, health problems; (3) orientation is given to the community, its services, location, and facilities, the school facilities and personnel, authorized play areas and school rules.

Five teachers from this school framed these assumptions:

1. For the new child, most behavior problems arise from tensions of displacement.
2. The more often a child moves, the greater his insecurity.
3. The more insecure a child feels, the greater his potential for presenting discipline problems.

These teachers studied what each member of the staff does to offset the problems of children who move in and out of the school, what new ideas might be shared, and how each teacher can deepen his understandings of the feelings of children.

These questions were devised to be used in guided interviews with children.

1. What time do you come to school?
2. Where is your room? What is the number? What is the teacher's name?
3. Where is your playground area?
4. Do you know the names of some children in your room?
5. How are you getting along in the cafeteria?
6. What is the route you take from school to your home?
7. What is different about this school? How is it like your last school?
8. What do you think you will like about this school? Is there something you would like to change?

Some of the children enjoy using this guide to write a story:

ABOUT MY NEW FRIEND

My new friend's name is He lives at He was born in His last school was in His favorite game is and the school subject he likes best is His favorite hobby is He is on physical education squad and is a member of the noon squad One other thing about my new friend is

This program has been in action at the school for several years. There are still troubled children, but the tensions and upheavals derived from the maladjustments are less a problem to the entire school.

Several teachers found the variety of influence techniques in *Mental Hygiene in Teaching* by Fritz Redl and William W. Wattenberg of special interest. The check list on p. 46 was devised to obtain opinions which can be used in discussion groups, for individual study, or for sharing specific examples of teacher behavior in influencing pupils. The authors point up four general classes of influence techniques:

1. Calling attention to a lapse in behavior or to the standards, thus supporting a child's ability to help himself
2. Removing the difficulties in the situation which children cannot master on their own
3. Guiding children to see their actions in a new light so that they can deal realistically with their own problems
4. Showing pleasant or unpleasant reactions to what a child does or might want to do in order to develop a feeling tone which serves as a guide to action

A sampling of responses to the check list indicated that teachers as a group tend to make a positive approach to control. However, in certain instances the choice of control methods they consider to be most effective is open to question. In part, the answer might reveal that the teachers need to give attention to the wholesomeness of their attitudes toward pupil control.

TWENTY-ONE WAYS TO INFLUENCE CHILDREN¹

	I use this				I believe it is	
	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Effective	Not effective
SUPPORTIVE TECHNIQUES						
1. Signaling the child before he commits "the crime".....						
2. Proximity control—moving physically nearer to give support.....						
3. Intentional ignoring of trivial attention-getting behavior.....						
4. Humor to relieve tensions.....						
5. Gripe sessions so that children may express dissatisfaction.....						
6. Imaginative play to express tensions and find better ways of behaving.....						
7. Criticism and encouragement in individual conferences.....						
8. Introducing new life-experiences to help children understand authority.....						
SITUATIONAL ASSISTANCE						
9. Helping over hurdles in work, routines, etc.....						
10. Restructuring the situation or change in activity.....						
11. Reviewing regular routines to give support.....						
12. Painless, not punitive, removal from the group.....						
13. Forestalling—not permitting situation to arise.....						
14. Use of restraint (protective, not punitive).....						
15. Offering an alternative (choice must be a real and honest choice).....						
REALITY AND VALUE APPRAISALS						
16. Direct appeal to reason.....						
17. Stating the standard and defining limits.....						
18. Interpret to child what results of his action may be.....						
THE PLEASURE-PAIN PRINCIPLE						
19. Praise or blame (behavior praised or blamed must be in line with children's values).....						
20. Follow-up discussion after the situation.....						
21. Rewards and promises.....						

¹ Fritz Redl and William W. Wattenberg, *Mental Hygiene in Teaching*, New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1957.

One teacher used the same inventory with sixth grade children. The questions were rearranged and worded so that children could answer

them. The teacher read the questions with some explanation and the children wrote "often, never," etc.

1. Do you feel that teachers have warned you before you have misbehaved or gotten into trouble? Do you think it is good or not? (This question was asked for each question)
2. Have teachers sat you near them to try to help you control yourself?
3. Have teachers ever overlooked some little misbehavior when it seemed unimportant? (Should teachers catch every little misbehavior?)
4. Have teachers ever used humor or jokes when things are pretty tense in the classroom? Is this a good way to get things back to normal?
5. Have teachers provided a time for griping about things that bother you—a gripe session time?
6. Have teachers ever used play acting to show different ways to behave in different situations?
7. Have teachers ever had individual conferences with you to tell you things you might do better in or to encourage you?
8. Have teachers tried to help you understand why you have to mind certain people as you grow up and after you are an adult?
9. Have teachers ever given you extra individual help to get you over hurdles and extra hard kinds of work?
10. Have teachers ever changed an activity when it seemed to get off to a bad start—or have they ever explained something in several different ways so that you could get it?
11. Do teachers go over the regular routines and rules and standards so you will remember them?
12. Have teachers ever taken you out of a group where you might not have been getting along and helped you to find a place in another group? (Not as a punishment, but as a way of helping you)
13. Have teachers ever stopped some unfortunate situation before it came up?
14. Have teachers ever warned you to keep you from doing things that might be too difficult for you? (Such as doing too hard stunts on the bars or reading a book too hard for you)
15. Do teachers ever offer you choices between two assignments you may do or different activities?
16. Do teachers try to make you see the reasons for the things you are supposed to learn and do?
17. Do teachers tell you definitely what you may and may not do and then stick to it?
18. Have teachers tried to explain to you what may happen if you do certain things?
19. Do teachers use praise or blame with you?
20. Have teachers used a discussion period after some important happening?
21. Do teachers use rewards and promises with you?

The children were asked to apply these questions to themselves. For example, they may mark "never" for question 2 because it had never happened to them, but they might think it an effective method. Also they were asked to try to think back over all the teachers they had had.

Some children used all kinds of exclamation marks to emphasize their feelings on certain methods. The teacher giving the questionnaire learned much about children's perceptions as they discussed the check list.

Children's responses to real or hypothetical situations help teachers evaluate their control techniques. The following situation evoked lively discussion in a sixth grade class.

Jack, eleven years old in the sixth grade, flighty, outspoken, and a wisecracker, has been told he cannot go on a field trip with the class because he is too much to handle along with the other 36 children. Write what you feel about the teacher's decision.

The following statements show the reactions of some of the children to this action of the teacher:

—You should talk to him and tell him if he doesn't act better he can't go.

—At the last minute you should let him go. Tell his mother to bring his lunch to school.

—I think we should give him a try at the last day.

—I think you should let Jack go on the trip because it isn't going to help him at all in learning how to behave on trips to leave him at school.

—I think Jack is sometimes a little rude. But when you go on a field trip you learn a lot. If Jack stays he will not learn these things.

—Why don't you put Jack with a person who will go along with a joke, but will shut him up when he gets too loud. Or sit him in the middle of the room with a nice girl and see what happens.

—I think you should give Jack another chance and let him go to the planetarium and let him learn as any other person. (He is not all bad. There is some good in him.)

—If he doesn't go it might make him bitter against our room and he might cause all the trouble he can. If I were you I would let him sweat it out until we are about ready to go.

—I do not think it is fair to keep Jack from going on the field trip because it will probably be very educating. He will also think we don't trust him enough. I think if we showed him we trusted him, he might feel different about it and might try harder to control himself.

—Always stress about going on a field trip and other things like that so he won't get out of line.

—Tell him all these reactions and everything. At first he will feel real bad, but when you tell him he can go the day before we go, he will behave like an angel on the field trip.

—If you don't let Jack go, he might try to get even with you by hurting someone else, it might not even be you. Try to make him understand that by hurting someone else, he's really hurting himself. Talk to him, don't try to punish him. It won't do any good. Why not let him go? Talk to him the day

before. Let him sleep on it. He really just doesn't know what's right or wrong. Let him grow up. He's only a little boy now.

As teachers and children develop mutual trust, they can explore problems of control with freedom. Children want to grow in independence, and teachers are seeking methods of control which contribute to learning and maturing for the children. As they seek, teachers need many opportunities to share their problems and successes.

Teachers express continuous concern about their responsibilities for helping children develop self-control and self-direction. As teachers study and work together to share problems and successes in discipline, they feel more secure and competent in their work with children. In their efforts to relate educational theory to day-by-day practices in the classroom, general agreements about discipline are strengthened.

Democratic and constructive control emerges as children engage in purposeful learning activities adapted to their abilities and interests. An environment appropriate to the characteristics and needs of children encourage self-control and self-direction. Classrooms which are the children's own and about which they make decisions foster purposeful order and control. As teachers rearrange the setting for learning, many control conflicts are avoided or minimized.

Children and teachers co-operatively establish standards for classroom learning. As children share in making rules they learn to take responsibility for their own behavior. In many ways teachers encourage children to express ideas and feelings about their own and others' behaviors. Study of children's reactions to rules and to discipline incidents enables teachers to determine the points that teaching toward self-discipline should emphasize.

Certain children present a special challenge to the teacher. Because of events in their backgrounds, these children have difficulty in learning to accept the boundaries and freedom of self-government. Intensive individual study enables teachers to help these children learn more constructive behaviors. Through such studies, teachers grow in understanding of all children.

HELPING CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH RATIONAL DECISION MAKING

STELLA BROHOLM, *Principal, York School*, and GRACE HENDRICKSON,
*Principal, Intermediate School, Hawthorne Elementary
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The administrative group of the Hawthorne Elementary School District has formulated a statement of six major beliefs and has listed the implications of each belief for school practices.

One statement deals with the development of self-discipline and control and reads as follows:

OUR SCHOOLS ARE CHARGED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

Therefore, teachers foster the growth of self-control and self-direction at all ages.

1. Children are helped to understand the reasons for rules and standards necessary to group living.
2. According to their maturity, children are involved in making decisions which will lead to self-government.
3. Through discussion and reflective thinking, children are encouraged to analyze mistakes and to foresee the consequences of their behavior.
4. The study of the rights and duties of people in groups is emphasized throughout the curriculum.

The following are only a few examples of the ways in which teachers, administrators, and children work together to implement this belief.

CHILDREN SOLVE PROBLEMS OF THEIR OWN BEHAVIOR IN THE CAFETERIA

In one school, teachers and children reported many problems in the cafeteria. Teachers' records indicated that a few children threw food on the floor and other children were unhappy about the disorder and noise. Children frequently complained that they didn't want to sit by others who were sloppy, gobbled food, or made unappetizing remarks. The problem was referred to the student council. Representatives of the council took up the problems in each classroom. After discussion, each class from second to sixth grade listed several suggestions. The council reviewed these and summarized them under such headings as

"Good Manners are Important for Our School" and "Good Manners are Important for Ourselves." These were printed in a small bulletin called "Buster Bee" which is given to each child. Children are encouraged to add their own standards. For example, "Good Manners are Important for Our Neighbors" lists the following:

1. I do not throw food because it would show poor manners and my friends would look for someone else to eat with.
2. I don't talk loudly when eating because I might disturb other people near me.
3. I stay at one place until I finish eating because I will disturb others if I move from place to place.

Perhaps you can add some of your own standards.

Discussion of the booklet is repeated whenever a new child enters the classroom so that standards are often reviewed. Teachers report that the atmosphere of the cafeteria has completely changed. The children themselves remind one another of lapses in manners. In general, lunch is now a pleasant and relaxed time for both adults and children.

An intermediate school faced a similar problem. The girls and boys had become so dissatisfied with the lunch menus that they were being disorderly, noisy, and rebellious. Both the pupils and parents threatened to boycott the cafeteria. Four petitions were presented to the principal—one complaining of too much seasoning, one that the food was too bland, a third that helpings were too small, and the last that they were too large!

The principal asked the student council to schedule a meeting to consider these petitions. The pupils quickly saw the inconsistency of the complaints. The principal and the director of food services discussed the difficulties and problems of managing a cafeteria. The pupils were advised that their payment did not cover the cost of food and labor and that further subsidy was needed. They were surprised too that choices of menus were partly determined by standards set by the school lunch program. Council representatives were invited to form a committee which might visit other schools to observe their cafeterias. Each representative carried out further discussions in his classroom explaining the problems and asking for suggestions. Although no radical changes were made in the menus, unrest seemed to subside almost immediately because the pupils had been listened to and considered. The contagion of children's attitudes was now operating to support the cafeteria instead of attacking it.

ARRANGEMENTS ARE REACHED ABOUT PLAYGROUND SAFETY

Problems on the playground have been handled in the same way. One year the student council undertook the job of collecting ideas about rules needed in school life. Both teachers and children felt that some rules were ignored because they were not commonly understood. The council proposed to write a booklet of playground safety rules which could be given to every child in the school. Representatives led discussions in each classroom regarding playground and safety problems and asked for suggested rules for each kind of equipment. The council analyzed these suggestions and recorded them in short positive statements. These rules were mimeographed in a booklet for each child with this foreword:

We, the York School Student Council, want York School to be the best school possible. We have written these rules so that we will be able to be good citizens of our school.

We feel that thoughtfulness and kindness should always be our first rule.

These are the rules by which we abide.

Several rules were listed for each kind of equipment used on the playground. For example:

Monkey bars

All who travel on bars, go in same direction.

Start when person in front is half way across.

Stay off top of bars.

Swings

Hold on with both hands.

If you want to leave swing, count to 30 and then to 10 to slow down.

CHILDREN ARE ENCOURAGED TO HELP SOLVE PROBLEMS OF CLASSROOM LIVING

Many teachers schedule a few minutes each Friday to discuss how the week went and ways in which working conditions might be improved. Pupils are then encouraged to write short personal notes to the teacher suggesting any changes which would help the group or individuals. At first some children are reluctant to express their reactions. Sometimes they use such nom de plumes as The Red Shadow, Annie Laurie, and The Phantom. The children gain in confidence, however, as the teacher tries to comply with some requests, writes individual notes occasionally to explain or respond to others, and discusses general problems with the group. The correct letter form is increasingly used with the children signing "sincerely," "your pupil," or "your friend."

Many are sealed or stapled and decorated with stamps and signs "personal" or "private." The weekly letters give teachers personal information about each child. The children, too, use the letters to build a warm relationship and communication with the teacher. Examples of the letters follow:

Dear Mrs. Mathis—I do not think Zorro and I will always do good but please let us sit by each other.—Gordon

To Mrs. Mathis—I wasn't in Gordon's room last year but I live near Gordon, and he talks too much and I do too.—Zorro.

Mrs. Mathis—I will like Tom to be our football team captain, or else I won't play, I will like to sit with Hugh or Tom. Sincerely yours, Victor

Dear Mrs. Mathis—I have been playing football in the street and I have been doing pretty good and I will keep doing good and get better for our noon time games.—Tom

Dear Mrs. Mathis—I wish you would move Dale. Your friend, Judy

Do you think Hugh and I are bad boys?—Gordon

Dear Mrs. Mathis—Thank you for letting us write new spelling words five times instead of ten times. The room has really been out of hand this week and the girls have been too. And you are still very nice no matter how bad we get. —Bonnie

Miss Mathis—I am sorry about breaking a promise about something but please try me again.—Steve

Dear Mrs. Mathis—Will you please ask Larry to stop calling me honey and all those silly names like that and playing like everybody has fleas.—Joan

I think it would be all right to go to the planetarium, but where is it and what do you see there?—Eddie

I did like the crazy spelling sentence like Policy fly around the room. I don't like the "Math" period. It's not right; we should have drills like $2 + 5 + 4 \div 6 =$, orally to see who goes to lunch first and things like that. I like science and government very much and I think we could base our art on science pictures. —Ruthie

Dear Mrs. Mathis—I think that you are a very nice teacher. I think that you are not as strict as you should be. But I really can't think at all, ha, ha. Sincerely, Gene S.

Dear Mrs. Mathis—I ask him if I could play and he said yes. But when I got out on the field he wouldn't let anybody do anything but him. Yours truly, Dennis

Dear Mrs. Mathis—I would like to go to a museum on the field trip. When can we go? I would like to go Nov. 21.—Ginger

Can I move on the other side?—Richard

Dear Mrs. Mathis—How come we do not have monitors any more? Your pupil, Carol C.

ATTENTION IS FOCUSED UPON SPECIFIC BEHAVIORS

Copies of several pamphlets in the series on "Getting Along" were given to the student council to consider in the year's planning. The council decided that the entire school might take up one topic at a time for discussion and study in each classroom. Each pamphlet is first discussed in the council, then each representative takes his copy to the class where he or the teacher reads it aloud. The topic is studied through many different activities. Some groups write stories, poems, or create plays which are shared with other classrooms. Paintings and drawings are reviewed by the student council and selected periodically for exhibition in the cafeteria. In one council meeting to review pictures illustrating the topic "Why Argue?" an older boy was critical of the children's writing and spelling. Another quickly pointed out "That's pretty good for fourth grade—these guys are doing the right stuff." The picture showed two boys trying to be first and was titled "Why Fight About It—It's Just a Game!" The poems and stories are sometimes compiled and shared with other classes and with the council. Typical examples about "Thinking of Others" follow.

Don'ts

Don't take over children's balls
'Cause it might lead to a brawl.
Don't go out to pick a fight
'Cause you know it isn't right.
Don't be a stubborn mule
But go along with the rules.

Interference

If you interfere in games
You'll be in the list of stupid names,
But if you don't wreck the games,
You'll be one of the honored names.

TEACHERS HELP CHILDREN INCREASE THEIR ACCEPTANCE OF
ONE ANOTHER

Teachers have discovered that many apparent discipline problems are in reality expressions of intergroup conflicts or of group antagonism toward an individual child. Sociograms are used periodically to determine the relationships within classrooms and to identify those children who need help in belonging to the group. The teacher tries to place these children in work and play groups according to their preferences. Many efforts are made to enable these children to earn status in the

class. As a child begins to build one or two friendships he becomes a better group member and many discipline conflicts are avoided.

Helmut, a ten-year-old boy recently arrived from Germany, presented many problems to his teacher. Wherever he went, there was trouble. The children complained that he "doesn't tell the truth and won't play fair." The teacher observed on the playground where Helmut "hugged the ball," refused to go down in four-square, and in other ways was unwilling to abide by game rules. Helmut was constantly in fights—even going to the pencil sharpener resulted in kicking and hitting.

One day when Helmut was absent the teacher decided to face the problem and its solution with group. The children quickly listed the reasons Helmut was in difficulties:

1. He didn't understand our rules.
2. Sometimes he had reasons for kicking. Someone reported seeing others tease and trip Helmut, especially when he first came.
3. Some of our words and phrases, "fair play," "going down," didn't have the same meaning for him, and we don't know his words.

The class then began to decide upon specific ways in which they might help Helmut. The children agreed that being placed away from others in the classroom was not the answer. Several children volunteered to sit next to Helmut and close to the pencil sharpener and drinking fountain. The group chose Steve for this "because he generally does things right." It was decided that groups of three children would take care of Helmut for every recess and noon period. These three would plan a game and include him, trying to help and teach him. If trouble should develop, one of the three would report to the teacher immediately. The children took their responsibilities so seriously, however, that the teacher rarely needed to be consulted. Once, when another teacher moved near to arbitrate a dispute, one of the children explained "Helmut's new here and we're trying to help him learn our games."

An especially planned boys club has helped to develop better control and group acceptance for a small number of difficult children. This was suggested by Redl's discussion of the "case history induced discipline problem." The boys club meets one hour a week during regular school time with an adult who is especially interested in behavior difficulties and skilled in working with expressive materials. This year the boys club has included the following boys.

Frank—impulsive, hotheaded, and sometimes violent in reaction.

Fearful and disliked by the children.

Jeffrey—buries himself in books and is an isolate on the playground.

Arthur—very low academic work. Emotional block suspected.

Edward—potential leader, but very aggressive at times.

James—follower, sometimes led into trouble by others.

A different boy brings refreshments each time. Elections are held often and each one has an office—this seems to mean a lot to these boys. The group activities are informal. This year for instance the boys wanted to paint and repair a sandbox in the room. They then filled it with sand and since have played with tiny cars in the sand. Their play is very repetitive, although they have done some painting and work with clay. They often mention other boys who want to get into the boys club and seem to enjoy discussing whether they would like to "have so and so." At one of these discussions one boy said, "Oh, he doesn't need it." Apparently the children are aware that the club is planned to meet a special need. Even with such a short time in a simple permissive group setting, teachers report that improvement is quickly noted. The child himself is better able to work in a group—at least he disrupts it less often. The class group becomes better able to "take" the child as his behavior becomes less violent and excessive.

CHILDREN ARE HELPED TO UNDERSTAND THEMSELVES AND OTHERS

For several years the seventh and eighth grade pupils of four school districts have held an all day teen-age conference. Topics and problems to be considered in the conference are selected through discussions held in each classroom. Each classroom also elects a boy and a girl representative. Many of the questions reflect the young adolescents' drive toward independence and their concern with relationships to authority as personified in teachers and parents. The conference is considered an important affair and gains status from being held on the campus of the junior college. A limited number of adults are invited to attend as listeners. The groups of boys and girls independently arrive at sound, sensible answers to many questions which vex adults and children alike. Studying the reports of the children's questions and the consensus agreed upon after full discussion helps parents and teachers understand early adolescents and to have confidence in their judgment. Some questions and answers follow.

If you are an "A" student how can you keep from being called teacher's pet?
Share special privileges with other students.

How can we make our parents understand that we're growing up?
By acting that way.

Should we argue with our parents?

That's a good way to prove you haven't grown up. If you think you are right, talk it over with them.

Why do parents embarrass you in front of friends?

They don't mean to, but sometimes maybe you embarrass them in front of their friends.

How can I control a bad temper?

Don't get mad at the smallest things and try to catch yourself before making a little mistake that you will be embarrassed for later.

Should you talk back to parents and teachers?

No, it isn't really wise unless of course you are falsely accused of something you didn't do.

Why can't parents realize things are different than they used to be? Why do they insist we do things like they used to and follow the same rules they had to?

Because they had the old ways too long.

Other decisions arrived at by students follow.

Teachers should have a certain amount of discipline but should not be overly strict. Punishments that can be given are loss of privileges, homework, and staying after school.

A teen-ager's punishment depends on the offense and the parents' attitude. Good punishments are cutting down allowances, television, dessert, and staying home (for a few days only).

Students who do not obey the teacher should be punished for what they have done, parents should be consulted, and the students given a chance to work with their main interests.

Teen-agers should make their own decisions, but consult adults if puzzled or not sure.

Teen-agers feel differently toward their parents than they did when they were younger, because they begin to do things for themselves and begin to have minds of their own.

That young adolescents feel satisfaction and sense their growing maturity is reflected in their evaluations of the conference and responses to the question "What are some of the things that you liked about the conference?"

I liked discussing the questions; they are very interesting.

Everyone tried to help and suggest answers to questions.

The way everyone contributed in the discussion

Everyone knew what to do. I liked their lunch very much.

Working out the questions in the buzz groups

The idea of having this conference on a college campus

I like to know what other teen-agers think.

Teen-agers' difficulties with parents discussed, meeting new friends

I think next time it should last two different days.

This is the best organized meeting I've ever attended.

I liked the conference very well. I think the lunch was good and everyone was very co-operative.

They should start at 9:00 o'clock. Make questions more specific.

I enjoyed every moment and I am very proud that I could attend it this year.

CHILDREN STUDY AND REACH SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF TARDINESS

Several teachers complained that tardiness in the morning and at intermissions was increasing. Discussion at faculty meetings indicated differences within the staff. Some teachers were relatively unconcerned and readily accepted children's excuses and explanations. Others were quite firm and listed unvarying penalties. Since general agreement could not be reached, it was decided to refer the problem to the student council for study.

The teachers bulletin, September 20, announced the beginning of the study.

REPRESENTATIVES TO DISCUSS SCHOOL RULES

Sometime today we are going to meet with these people and would like to have the following information from class discussions:

1. Some of the reasons for children being tardy in the morning
2. Some of the reasons for boys and girls not getting to class on time following an intermission
3. Some ideas for helping these people remember to be prompt
4. Ideas for assisting boys and girls to remember that gum does not belong at school
5. Suggestions regarding hairdo, dress, and appearance at school

When we call the meeting ask each representative to be provided with notebook and pencil to take notes for his class.

Later bulletins from the principal's office reported the meetings to all teachers as follows:

RESULTS OF MEETING OF ROOM REPRESENTATIVES, SEPTEMBER 20

This is to keep you up to date on what is being done with the room representatives who met for the first time today. The boys and girls reported the reasons any boy or girl had stated for being tardy in the morning or following intermissions. As the meeting closed, we were working on those reasons considered "unexcused," that is, within the power of the student to do something,

and those considered "excused," which the school might reasonably be asked to overlook if a note is brought from the parent.

We hope to go on and look at all of the reasons given for tardiness and make recommendations for consequent penalties. We should also like to discuss the question of gum chewing at school, the reasons we have rules against it, and what should be done about it. Discussion of grooming will come last.

Mr. Claydon and Mr. Oliver happened to be free at the time of the meeting and attended. We hope that we will have some teachers at all the meetings. The room representatives were usually well chosen and none was hesitant to speak.

Thank you for your patience with us in working out these details. Perhaps, the simpler procedure would be to set the rules by the faculty and "hand them down." However, if we attempt to practice democracy as far as the age of our students makes it practical, this way seems better. Please give us suggestions. Also give your representative an opportunity to report to your class the results of each meeting's discussion. The class can then give reactions to bring to the next meeting. We also hope that boys and girls will discuss these matters with parents.

The children listed the following reasons for being late:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. In the morning: | Morning chores |
| Leave house late, distance | Animals follow and have to be sent home |
| Late bedtime, oversleep | Get to school but leave for some place else |
| Stop at store on way | Absentmindedness—returning for something forgotten |
| Trouble with bike | Physical disability |
| Clocks slow or alarm fails | |
| Family trouble | |
| 2. After intermissions: | Too far away when bell rings |
| Walk slowly and don't want to get back | Game is so interesting, don't stop |
| Noon—referee duties | Looking for things lost |
| Finishing lunch and putting trash in can | Closing of game takes time |
| Nutrition—long lines at machines or ice cream window | Go down wrong arcade and have to retrace |
| Checking in balls | Girls spend time primping and don't hear bell |

ROOM REPRESENTATIVES' MEETING, SEPTEMBER 25

An additional reason for being late was suggested by one representative:

—Lingering around the machines in the office hall.

The group met for almost an hour to consider the reasons for tardiness and came to the following conclusions:

1. The student's own responsibility and therefore subject to some penalty at school and in helping him to remember
 - leaving the house late, distance—We should time ourselves
 - late bedtime, oversleeping. A boy or girl of this age it was felt is able to control his own bedtime, except on rare occasions
 - stop at store on way

- morning chores. The group agreed that parents generally were fair and did not assign too many tasks. If a person does not use his time wisely, he should suffer the consequences
- Getting to school, then leaving to go some place else
- Absentmindedness, forgetting something and returning for it
- Physical disability, unless an accident occurs on the way to school
- Lingering around the vending machines
- Playing on way to school
 2. Excusable once, second time require a note from parents
- Trouble with bike on way to school
 3. Excusable once and to be followed by a note the next day from parent
- Animal following and having to be taken home
 4. Excusable
 - Family troubles
 5. Excusable two times only, providing a note is sent by the parent next day
- Clock slow or alarm failing to operate

RESULTS OF MEETING OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES, SEPTEMBER 26

The meeting opened with some discussion concerning the reasons for children being late after intermissions—It was agreed that

1. The following reasons should not be accepted—
 - Walk slow so don't get back
 - Finishing lunch and putting trash in cans. The group brought out the suggestions that boys and girls could carry the wrapper to classroom wastebasket
 - Nutrition period, long lines. It was agreed that with everyone's co-operation, this would no longer be a problem.
 - Too far away when bell rings
 - Game is interesting so don't stop playing on time. The regularly scheduled games always stop on time. Games such as four-square should be terminated by the individuals taking part.
 - Go down wrong arcade and have to go back
 - Girls take time primping and don't hear bell.
2. There was no justification for the following reasons since no problem really existed
 - Noon referees have duties. Everyone agreed that the teachers allowed time for this and that it hadn't been a real problem.
 - Checking in balls
 - Closing of game takes time.

DISCUSSION REGARDING SOME KIND OF PENALTY FOR TARDINESS

After many suggestions, the group decided to recommend to the faculty that the following procedure be tried:

Penalty should be double the time tardy plus ten minutes.

If a student is tardy three times, he is referred to the office for counseling.

If a fourth tardiness occurs, parent is notified.

The boys and girls felt that if the teacher made an assignment for the period after school, it should be one which could be completed in the length of time they were staying. It was brought out that sometimes the teacher "talked to

them" and that this helped. Also some teachers asked that students "just sit." The group felt this was not very effective since they "sat and didn't really think at all about the tardiness."

Gum chewing was discussed. All of the reasons for not having gum at school were brought out, such as

- Gum is carelessly thrown on grass and gets on people's clothing.
- It is very difficult to remove from floors.
- It has been a problem in the cafeteria since people put it on dishes and it is requiring more time to clean up dishes.
- It is not in place at school.

It was agreed that penalty for gum chewing should be left up to individual teacher and class or individual teacher.

The children seemed to feel great satisfaction in taking part in the discussions and in reaching agreements. Teachers reported that most children showed more responsible behavior and that tardiness had greatly decreased. The staff has recommended that a similar procedure be used next year and be extended to other problems as they arise.

SEVERAL PRINCIPLES ARE IMPORTANT IN HELPING CHILDREN TO MAKE WISE DECISIONS

1. The children's representative must be ones they have readily chosen and to whom they will listen.
2. There must be many opportunities for discussion with the class groups to formulate ideas and for reports of the ideas of other groups as well as of the representatives' group.
3. Time is needed to encourage everyone to express his ideas and to grasp what others are suggesting.
4. At first children often are reckless in the penalties they propose. As adults help them to consider the effects upon others' feelings and behavior, they quickly become sympathetic and understanding.
5. With whatever problem the process begins, staff and children quickly see new opportunities for group decisions. Thus, many incidents of school living are used in developing the skills and insights essential to children of a democracy.

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